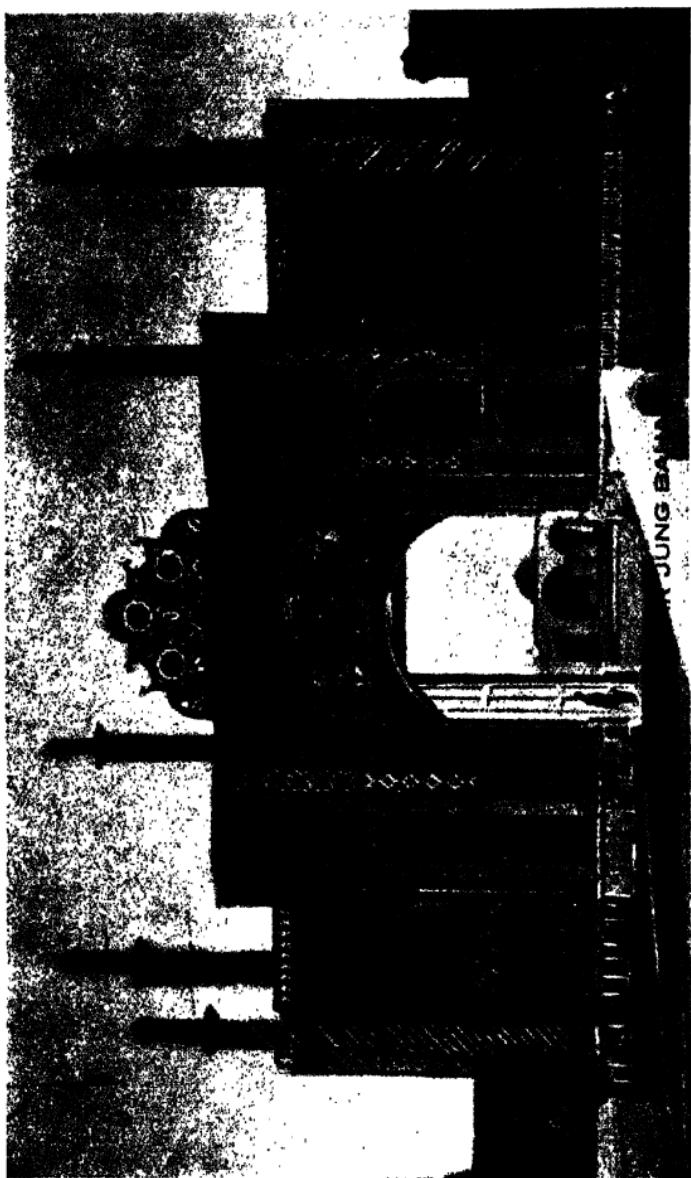


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**THE
WRITINGS OF MANKIND**



THE FAMOUS GOVERNMENT BRIDGE AND GATEWAY
TEHERAN, PERSIA

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THE WRITINGS OF MANKIND

Selections from the Writings of All Ages, with Extensive Historical Notes, Comment and Criticism, Giving the Customs, Habits, Characters; the Arts, Philosophies and Religions, of Those Nations That Have Contributed Most to Civilization

By

CHARLES H. SYLVESTER

AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE"
"JOURNEYS THROUGH BOOKLAND", ETC.

T W E N T Y V O L U M E S

Illustrated

VOLUME TWO

ARABIA - PERSIA - EGYPT - HEBREW



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KANSAS CITY, MO.

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ARABIA



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE COUNTRY. *Jerivat-al-Arab*, as the Arabs call the great peninsula lying in the southwestern corner of Asia, is an irregular rectangle, bounded on the east by the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman; on the south by the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and on the west by the Red Sea. Though now not strictly true politically, yet for our purpose

the name Arabia may be applied to the whole great peninsula from 12° to 34° north latitude and from 32° to 60° east longitude. Its longer diagonal is about eighteen hundred miles, its average width six hundred miles, its area over one million two hundred thousand square miles and its population more than five million.

The northern and central parts are in general a high desert tableland concerning which we do not have very definite information; but along the Red Sea and west of the mountains is a narrow, fertile strip composing the new kingdom of Hedjaz on the north and the province of Yemen to the south, the boundaries of which are vaguely defined. Mecca and Medina are both in Hedjaz, which contains about one-fifth of the entire population. On the whole, the climate resembles that of Africa—hot and moist along the coast; dry, arid, with sudden changes, in the interior uplands. In the north, mountains rise to the height of two thousand feet, and toward the south are others nearly four times as high.

There are no forests, but many native shrubs and small trees are highly important commercially. Arabia is the home of the coffee plant; rich aromatic gums abound, and with spices and dates make a large part of the natural products, though other important plants have been introduced.

The wild animal life is much like that of Africa, but for thousands of years a fine breed of horses has been in perfect domestication and

has been the chief love of the Arabs. The camel is the mainstay of the inhabitants of the desert region and is the one unfailing beast of burden for the whole peninsula.

II. THE PEOPLE. The native Arab is of moderate size, but strong, lithe and active. His head is well-formed, carried nobly and covered with dark, almost straight hair. Black, flashing eyes; sharp, clear-cut features; bright, swarthy complexion, and fine teeth in a well-formed mouth tell of the courageous, proud, sharp-witted nature of the man within. They are earnest, hospitable, temperate and imaginative; but they are covetous, cruel to their enemies and bitterly revengeful for slight injuries.

For countless centuries nomadic tribes under patriarchal government have lived in their low, open, black camel's hair tents, moving about at will in long caravans, marauding, fighting or peacefully tending their flocks, as the moment demanded. Courage they never lacked, luxuries they did not covet, education they knew not. Women tended the rude homes, brought up the children and were cheerfully subservient to the men. The Bedouin of to-day is little different from his ancestors of thousands of years ago, and yet at one time he went forth under the fire of religious enthusiasm and conquered a great part of the world.

The town-bred Arab has been modified by his intercourse with commercial nations and with the millions of pilgrims of his own faith,

but still at heart he is the same as his wandering forbears.

The Arab race belongs to the great Semitic group. Tradition would have it that they more recently came from Ishmael, the banished and wandering son of Abram and Hagar, upon his union with one of the daughters of the province of Yemen. But we are not interested at the present moment in their origin. For us in this inquiry there is little prior to the time of Mohammed.

III. THE LANGUAGE. The Arabic language has a dignified and a rotund quality, with rich, full and flexible vowel sounds and deep guttural notes. It is spoken vigorously, with heavy accentuation. Of the two principal dialects, the one of the North has been the official and literary language and is still spoken in Arabia, Northern Africa and Western Asia, and is an important component of Turkish and late Persian.

The characters of the written language are of Syrian origin, and were well established before the sixth century. The Cufic characters were used at first, but were superseded by the Neshki, which are still in use and have been adopted by Persians and Turks. The vowel sounds are represented by strokes above and below the line, and the consonants by dots. In most Semitic languages the characters are written from right to left.

The language is deficient in those words which are needed only by a highly-civilized

people, but the vivid imagination and passionate feeling of the Arab has manifested itself by a great richness in adjectives and in synonyms. It is not unknown for the same thing to have hundreds of different names, or rather descriptive phrases, which in a figurative way signify the same thing.

IV. MYTHOLOGY. In early times there existed in Southern Arabia a powerful tribe or sect with their largest and wealthiest city at Sabea. The writers of the Middle Ages regaled themselves with startling tales of the marvelous richness of the people and the productivity of the soil. In the Bible accounts this place is known as Sheba, and tradition has it that it was a queen of this city who in search of wisdom made the famous visit to Solomon, and according to Arab tradition, she became a wife to Solomon and bore a son, Menelik, who afterward ruled the Ethiopians.

The religion of this sect consisted largely in a worship of the sun, moon and stars, and is known as *Sabeism*, or *Zabism*.

According to this faith, the Creator is One, original, eternal, but manifest in a multitude of forms, chiefly in the seven leading planets. "It is as if the seven planets were his seven limbs and as if our seven limbs were his seven spheres in which he manifests himself, so that he speaks with our tongue, sees with our eyes, hears with our ears, touches with our fingers and comes and goes with our feet and acts through our members."

Man is composed of contradictory and opposing elements which make his existence a continual struggle, his acts vacillating and unwise. Were it not for constant worship with sacrifices and purifications, his passions would carry him to the level of the beasts. The soul does not die, but rewards and punishments are not eternal.

In effect, the Sabeans were gross idolators, and their beliefs, which typified those of the Arabs in general, were the religion of the Arabs up to the time of Mohammed. They had a multiplicity of gods, represented by images of men and women, of beasts and birds; and the people, losing sight of the symbolism, paid their worship and made their sacrifices direct to the images.

V. THE TRADITION OF ISHMAEL AND THE KAABA. The Arabs hold that Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, was buried where the life of her son was saved, where she "saw a well of water and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad to drink." At this spot they contend the spring still flows, the sacred Zemzem from which pious Mohammedans still drink. When Ishmael drank, it was a desert wilderness, but now it is in the site of the city of Mecca, and there stands the Kaaba, the square stone building, probably a heathen shrine in the beginning, but by tradition said to be the temple which Abraham built and consecrated at God's command. The Kaaba (Caaba or Kaabeh) marks the sacred spot toward

which every one of the Faithful, no matter where he may be, faces as he says his prayers.

In its walls is the famous black stone upon which Abraham stood, and which, as devout Mohammedans believe, came down from Paradise white as milk, but which has been turned black by the sins of the countless thousands who have touched it.

VI. EARLY LITERATURE. Long before the birth of Mohammed the Arabs had developed a poetry of which some specimens remain, but that was the extent of their literature. The Arabian is essentially poetic in his temperament, and the long journeys he made to the rhythmical swayings of his camel's body taught him his meter, and he early discovered that his living ship of the desert moved more rapidly where his driver sang to the animal's plodding steps.

The poet saw in the whirling sandstorms and in the fiery heat of the desert the work of jinn, or spirits, some of which were malignant but more of them merely mischievous, and to these he ascribed the inspiration of his genius. The bantering spirit of some of the verses and the biting sarcasm of those composed against his enemies were but the outcome of a belief in the magic power of the jinn, whom he invoked to enliven his play and to cast a spell over his opponents. These satiric poems were recited with some ceremony by poets who anointed one side of the head, wore but one sandal, trailed their mantles on the ground or

made some other curious alteration in their customary habits. The satires were passed from mouth to mouth, and thus only a few fragments of this earliest of Arab poetry have been preserved.

Annual conventions of the sons of the desert were held, and the leading singers contended for small rewards and great honors. The prowess of the Arabs, their honor, the beauty of their women, the richness and color of their landscape, all entered into the rhapsodies. As early as the fifth century we hear that at their great conventions places were set apart for these poetic contests, and an early legend says that the compositions of the victorious bards were written in golden letters upon Egyptian paper and hung upon the walls of the Kaaba. The towns produced few poets, for there the spirit of commercialism was too prominent: Arab poetry was desert born and desert nourished.

There is still preserved some of the work that was "suspended in the Kaaba," notably that of seven worthies who have been called the *Arabian Pleiades* and whose poems are known as "the Suspended," or as the "necklace of pearls."

Shanfara, "the man with the thick lips," was one of the early warrior-poets, famous as a man who could run faster than a horse at full gallop; in fact, the superlative of human speed is still "a runner swifter than Shanfara." It is said that during a local war he declared that



From Painting by Lettseder.

Photo: Ewing Galloway AN ARABIAN SONG
ARABIAN POETRY WAS DESERT-BORN, AND DESERT-NOURISHED.

he would kill a hundred of his enemies. Every time he met a man of that tribe he shot an arrow through his eye, but when ninety-nine had been killed, Shanfara himself fell a victim to the last. According to the legend, Shanfara had requested that his body should not be buried, and some time after his death and while his skull still lay at the spring where he lost his life, one of his foes in passing stepped upon the skull, a splinter of bone entered his foot, and he died from the wound. Thus was the tale of a hundred completed.

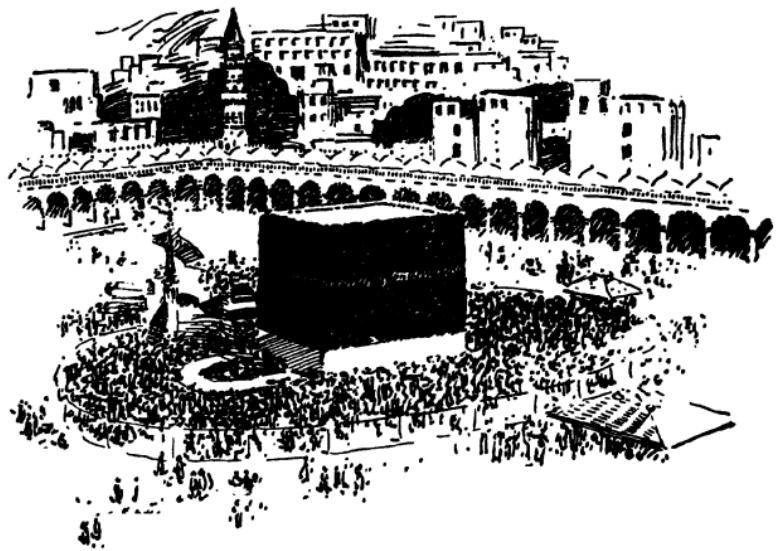
Greatest of the "Pleiades" was Zuhair ibn Abi Sulma, whose verses were serious and somewhat didactic. He was original, independent, and cared nothing for praise unless it was well-deserved. Terseness and vigor marked his style, and his sententious epigrams are still a part of the common language. His patron showed him excessive honors, and the poet became so ashamed to receive great gifts for paltry services that when in company he showed his independence and nobility by greeting everybody except his patron. In later years when the patron's descendants muttered, "His talents were great, but so were our gifts;" the sons of Zuhair would retort, "Your gifts have vanished, but his poems live on. They are robes of honor which Time cannot decay."

His son, Kaab ibn Zuhair, lived in the time of Mohammed, and began by scoffing at the new Prophet and scoring him with bitter sarcasm. So troublesome did this become to

Mohammed and so fearful was he of the poet's influence, that he decreed Zuhair's death. The skillful poet thereupon changed his tactics and wrote such pleasing panegyrics that the Prophet gave his own cloak to the author and thereby established his reputation forever.



A SON OF THE
ARABIAN DESERT



CHAPTER II

MOHAMMED

EARLY LIFE. Abdallah, the father of Mohammed, or Mahomet, was a poor man who belonged to an inferior family of the powerful tribe of the Koreish, and died near the time of his son's birth, which occurred about A. D. 570. The child was named Mohammed, which means "the praised," a rather common name of his time. After the father's death, it is reported, Amina, the mother, gave her child to a Bedouin woman, that after the fashion of her country she might nurse him in the health-giving air of the desert. Soon after the mother died, and Mohammed went to his grandfather's, but when after two years the child was again bereaved of his protector, an uncle, Abu

Talib, poor though he was, adopted the boy and proved his lifelong benefactor.

Until he was twenty-five Mohammed earned a scanty livelihood as a shepherd and camel-driver, if we are to believe those poorly authenticated legends, which are all we have to follow.

II. A CHANGE OF FORTUNE. When Mohammed had thus reached an early manhood, a wealthy widow, Khadija by name, engaged him as camel-driver to attend her to the fairs and to work in other capacities. Her interest in the young man grew, and she offered him her hand in marriage. Mohammed accepted, although she was much the older, and four daughters, and two sons who died early, were born to them. He was not a success as a merchant, and even then spent much time in solitary meditation.

III. THE REVELATIONS. Mohammed was not forty years old, and as yet might be considered a nervous, flighty, epileptic failure. It is not consistent with our knowledge of the great Prophet to consider him an impostor, a master of villainies. Of his sincerity there can be no question. To how great an extent he deceived himself we will not try to determine, nor to what degree his epilepsy was responsible for his imaginings. Rather will we give in merest outline the history of his life from the stand-point, perhaps, of one of his followers, leaving the reader to separate the impossible and the incredible from the actual facts.

The first “divine” revelation came to him in the mountain solitudes of Hira, near Mecca, by the mouth of the Angel Gabriel, who appeared to him there and commanded him to spread the true religion abroad.

From then till the end of his life he was frequently the recipient of these communications. Sometimes they came to him in the tones of a bell; again in the voice of a man; or perhaps in a dream the revelations came. They were incited by incidents of the day; they rebuked an enemy; they chided a friend; they defended his relatives; or they elaborated the tenets of his faith. There was no order or continuity to the revelations, not the least evidence of a prearranged scheme; whatever came into his mind he delivered.

And how he delivered these poetic rhapsodies! With face streaming with perspiration, with red eyes protruding from their sockets and foam gathering upon his lips, he roared forth his words in a voice which the Arabs likened to the bellowing of a camel.

IV. EARLY RECEPTION OF THE REVELATIONS.
The first revelation was communicated to few: his wife, Khadija; his daughters; his stepson Ali; his favorite slave, Zaid; and his prudent, sagacious and faithful friend, Abu Bekr; and these were his first supporters.

Gradually the circle widened. Other relatives were told. His uncle Abu Lahab called him a fool; his uncle Abu Talib never believed, but as long as he lived he stretched his power-

ful protecting arm over his adopted son. Waraka, a convert to Judaism and a relative of Mohammed's wife, told him about the Hebrew doctrine, and the Oriental imagery of the Scriptures appealed to the poetic soul of the ignorant Prophet, as in a lesser degree did the doctrines of Christianity.

During the four years of his private proselyting he made but forty converts and these were chiefly people of low rank, even slaves. Then came the revelation that drove him out to defy the scorn of unbelievers and spread his doctrine publicly. He accepted the commission and began those powerful threats, pleadings and exhortations which marked him as one of the greatest preachers the world has ever known.

At first the people of Mecca smiled at his vehemence or paid little attention to him; they thought him a common poet, a cheap soothsayer, a crazy man, a liar. But one by one his converts increased until even the skeptical Meccans began to fear for the sanctity of their pagan religion or to dread the violent antagonism of Hebrews and Christians. Persecutions began, and the simple followers of Mohammed suffered so much that at one time he even recommended them all to migrate to Abyssinia. Even Mohammed, protected though he was by Abu Talib, became so low-spirited and fearful of himself that he contemplated suicide, and his uncle removed him to a fortified castle far from Mecca.

During his absence, in spite of the opposition of the Koreish and other tribes, the new doctrine gained converts, largely through the instrumentality of Abu Bekr, Hamza and Omar, the last at one time among the bitterest of Mohammed's enemies, but later one of the three heads of Islam. At the end of three years a "peace party" was organized, and the Prophet was allowed to return to Mecca.

But his trials were by no means over. His faithful wife Khadija died, and shortly afterward his loyal uncle, Abu Talib. Then came poverty and misery, a futile emigration to Taif, and more trials at Mecca.

Yet there were some rays of light. He had preached to pilgrims from Medina, for instance, and there where the people from long association with Jews were more familiar with the ideas of a single God, of divine revelation, of a Messiah, of prophecy, his teaching met with better results, and several converts were the result. A second visit gave twelve converts, a third, more than seventy, and with these he made a firm alliance and obtained a strong foothold there.

V. THE HEGIRA. The friendliness of the Medinans caused Mohammed to think of moving there with his disciples, and having sent about a hundred families he started with Abu Bekr, and after a perilous journey reached Medina in safety. This event, occurring June 16, A. D. 622, is known as the Hegira (Hijrah), and marks the beginning of the Mohammedan

era, as we reckon time from the birth of Christ. The new town became known as Medinat Annabi (City of the Prophet), or Medina City, and at once the prospects of Mohammed began to improve permanently. He was no longer a madman, an impostor, but a lawgiver, the highest judge, the ruler of the city and of two powerful tribes. During the first year it was revealed to him that he was permitted in the name of God to go to war with his enemies, chiefly then the inhabitants of Mecca. At the same time he tried to convert Jews to his faith, but they laughed at him, and always the two religions have remained at deadly enmity.

VI. SUCCESS. The tide had assuredly turned, and from the time of the Hegira to his death Mohammed lived in the open, the leading figure in Oriental lands. He had married his second wife, Sanda, and then increased the number of his wives. At the time of his death he left nine, of whom Ayeshah, the daughter of Abu Bekr, and Hafsa, daughter of Omar, are the best known.

At first his military raids were not successful, yet in the sixth year of the Hegira he undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca. The Meccaans prevented its consummation at the Kaaba, but they were to make a treaty favorable to Mohammed, so that he successfully accomplished the pilgrimage the next year, and all Arabia then began to flock to his standard.

Mohammed was by no means always successful; in fact, he was many times defeated in



From Painting by Gérôme, Metropolitan Museum, New York

PRAYER IN THE MOSQUE

battle, was wounded and in imminent danger of losing his life. Yet each time did he recuperate, bring together his scattered forces and proceed again on his way. His doctrines were a great disintegrating force which everywhere destroyed, perhaps slowly, but none the less effectively, the rudely-organized pagan faiths that opposed him.

At length the Meccans broke their treaty, and the Prophet, seizing the opportunity, marched ten thousand Moslem soldiers against the city, surprised and captured it with little resistance. This established him firmly in Arabia, and tribes came submissively from every direction to do homage to the messenger of God, or the new Prince of Arabia. This was in the year eight of the Hegira.

VII. LAST YEARS. Toward the end of the tenth year of the Hegira he undertook a solemn pilgrimage to Mecca, this time at the head of forty thousand Moslem followers. There on Mount Arafat he instructed them on all important matters, and particularly upon the Hadj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, whose ceremonies he then fixed forever.

This proved to be his last visit to the sacred city. Returning from an expedition to Syria, he fell dangerously ill. One night in the delirium of his fever he went to the cemetery in Medina and wept and prayed among the tombs. For a few days he kept his feet, but then growing too weak he went to the house of Ayesah, his favorite wife, and there near the mosque

he had founded passed through his final sickness. He kept up public prayers as long as he could, preached to the people, counseling a strict and faithful compliance with the law, and probably would have named his successor had not the jealousies of his immediate followers prevented him.

Toward the last his mind was wandering, but he spoke of nothing except Heaven and the angels. About noon of Monday, the eighth of June, A. D. 632, in the eleventh year of the Hegira, he died, with his head in the lap of the faithful Ayeshah.

His followers were intensely excited; even Omar would not believe in the Prophet's death. But Abu Bekr, always wise, addressed the multitude: "Whoever among you has served Mohammed, let him know that Mohammed is dead; but he who has served the God of Mohammed let him continue in His service, for He is alive and never dies."

Mohammed was buried in the night of June ninth, in the house of Ayeshah, where he had died, and later the mosque was extended to cover the spot.

VIII. MOHAMMED'S APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER. The great Prophet of Islam was not a large man, but his appearance was imposing, for he was lean, had broad shoulders and was of athletic build. His head was strongly molded and bore a heavy growth of flowing black hair, which continued into a long black beard. Flashing black eyes glittered from beneath

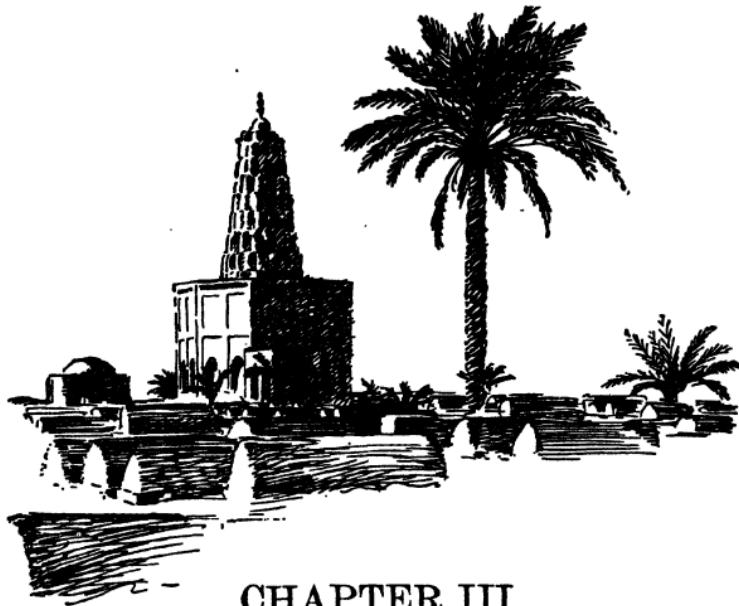
black eyebrows and through long thick eyelashes. His large nose was slightly aquiline and well formed. Between his shoulders was a black mole, to his followers the seal of his prophetic mission.

His walk was heavy and shambling, his body being thrown forward and downward with every step, yet it could not be called awkward. Altogether, he was an impressive figure, especially when he was speaking in public.

To a great extent his manners and personal morals were those of his time. It is true that he was sometimes cunning and deceitful, cowardly and extremely resentful; moreover, he was a sensualist, even according to the lax standards of his own day. On the other hand, he was extremely simple in his tastes and habits; lived in a hut and mended his own clothes, even in the height of his power. He was tender and solicitous for all the members of his family, absolutely faithful to his friends, amiable in his intercourse with strangers, and at times even forgiving to his enemy. Having the virtues and the vices that go with high-strung and poetic temperament, he might well be classed with many a modern bard whose life has been disfigured by similar weaknesses.



A SHEPHERD



CHAPTER III

THE KORAN

NAMES AND HISTORY. The word *Koran*, meaning *The Reading*, or *Proclamation*, was first applied to each single revelation to Mohammed, then to groups of them, and finally to the complete collection. It is the Bible of the Mohammedans, but, more than that, it is their social, civil, military, commercial and legal code. The book is otherwise known to believers as *Al Forkan* (The Illumination), *Al Moshaf* (The Book), *Al Kitab* (The Scripture) and *Al Dhikr* (The Admonition).

Within a year after the death of Mohammed, Abu Bekr at the suggestion of Omar made a collection of the various revelations, it being foreseen that as those warriors died who had received the words from the lips of Mohammed,

errors would creep in and ultimately the genuine “readings” would be lost. So Zaid, who had been an amanuensis for Mohammed, collected his words “from date leaves and tablets of white stone, bones and parchment leaves, and the breasts of men” and made an exact copy of them without the alteration of a word.

By the thirteenth year of the Hegira different versions had appeared, and a final collection and authorized copy was made under the direction of Caliph Othman. This is the Koran exactly as it is now in the hands of the Mohammedans.

II. PLAN AND ARRANGEMENT. Mohammed gave his revelations as he received them, each in a chapter, or *sura*, by itself. These suras, one hundred fourteen in number, were arranged by the compilers, not in the order in which they were delivered but according to an arbitrary standard of length—the longest first. This wholly subverted the natural order and threw the suras into inextricable confusion. However, this arrangement is no more confusing than are the contents of the chapters themselves, for they are not homogeneous in any respect. Topics of all kinds are brought up regardless of relationship, and it is impossible to predict from one verse what subject will be treated in the next.

The suras were not numbered, but each bears a name, suggested usually by words in the text, but by no means indicative of the subject treated. Some of the names are poetic, many

commonplace, others seemingly ridiculous, viz.: *The Enfolded; The Desire; The Inevitable; The Ranks; Kneeling; The Bee; The Cow; Joseph, Peace be on Him; Al Araf; Cattle; Women; She Who Pleaded*, etc.

Every sura except the ninth begins with the Arabic phrase, *Bismillahi 'rrahmani 'rrahim*, which may be translated, *In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful*, or *In the name of the merciful and compassionate God*. The phrase was not original with Mohammed, but was coined by a contemporary poet, who taught it to the Koreish. To some of the suras Arabic letters are prefixed, but how they came there or what they mean is not known, although the devout believe they have some magic significance.

III. STYLE. The faulty arrangement, the disjoined and disordered material, the frequent repetitions and the vagueness of ideas, make the Koran difficult to read intelligently and more difficult to master. Its style, however, is vivid, poetic and full of the imagery of the East, but it varies with the period at which the revelation was delivered. It is all in rhymed prose, though this feature is not so strongly marked in the long suras, which were promulgated late in the Prophet's life.

The suras fall into two classes—those produced at Mecca and those that followed the Hegira. The first of the former group are the most poetic. They show the time when inspiration was strong and ideas dominated

expression; they are the prophetic utterances, before Mohammed became the ruler. He was then the poet, and he called upon his hearers to admire the wonders of nature, "all of which," he says, "are signs of God's power if you will understand them." At Medina his utterances are less those of a poet and more those of a ruler weighed down with the cares of his people, and his style is weaker and more involved.

Many sentences show the parallelism that appeared frequently in the Hebrew scriptures, and there are also numerous refrains, such, for instance, as the one in the following brief extract from the fifty-fifth sura, which is in general an appeal to men and jinn:

A bright flash of fire shall be hurled at you both, and molten brass, and ye shall not defend yourselves from it:

Which then of the bounties of your Lord will ye twain deny?

When the Heaven shall be cleft asunder, and become rose red like, like stained leather:

Which then of the bounties of your Lord will ye twain deny?

On that day shall neither man nor jinn be asked of his sin:

Which then of the bounties of your Lord will ye twain deny?

By their tokens shall the sinners be known, and they shall be seized by their forelocks and their feet:

Which then of the bounties of your Lord will ye twain deny?

It reminds one forcibly of the refrain in the one hundred thirty-sixth Psalm:

1. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.
2. O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.
3. O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.
4. To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.
5. To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.
6. To him that stretches out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.
7. To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever.
8. The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever.
9. The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.

The rhyme or alliterative endings of the lines, though simple enough in Arabic, cannot be reproduced in English, and the standard translations make no attempt to imitate them.

The first four lines of one of the suras may be transferred from the Arabic into the corresponding English characters and so give some idea of the nature of the rhyming prose just mentioned:

*Bismillahi 'rrahmani 'rrahim.
El-hamdoor lillahi rabi 'lalameen.
Arrahmani 'rrahim.
Maliki yowmi-d-din.
Iyyaka na'buda wa-'iyyaka nasta'iyn.*

A translation of those lines follows:

*In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds!*

The compassionate, the merciful !
King on the day of reckoning !
Thee only do we worship, and to Thee do we cry for help.

To the devout follower of Islam the Koran was coequal with God, uncreated, eternal. The first copy of it stood from the beginning by the throne of the Almighty as a gigantic tablet of stone whereupon in letters of living light the holy words were written. In the dark watches of the mysterious night of Al Kadhr in the month of Ramadan the Angel Gabriel brought a copy of it, bound cleverly in white silk and blazing with jewels, down to the lowest heaven, whence at intervals during twenty-three years portions of it were communicated to Mohammed.

It follows as a matter of course that to the Mohammedan the style of the Koran is matchless. No human pen can ever equal it, for it is divine utterance. In effect, the canons of Arabic were fixed once and for all time when the Koran was written.

IV. AN OBJECT OF REVERENCE. The Koran is the principal book taught in the Mohammedan schools, where the pupils sit crosslegged on the floor about their master and repeat the suras aloud till they know them all by heart. Then every forty days through life they are said to repeat them; and in time, to make several copies.

The book is never touched until the person has been purified, and then it is always kissed and carried to the forehead; it is never held

below the girdle ; and nothing irritates a Mohammedan more than to see a copy of the Koran in the hands of an unbeliever. Oaths are taken upon it as we swear upon the Bible ; it is consulted upon all weighty questions ; and sentences from it are inscribed upon banners, doors, over windows and upon weapons and tools. No wealthy believer can spend too much upon the binding of his Koran. Of white silk and the finest of leathers, richly ornamented with gold and blazing with precious stones are the bindings, while within, the characters are written in gold on the most expensive of papers or parchment.

V. THE INTERMISSION. The ninety-sixth sura of the Koran is the earliest, and of it the first five verses are supposed to constitute the first revelation of the voices, while the remainder of the sura was probably added at a later time. It reads as follows, in the translation of the Rev. J. M. Rodwell :

SURA XCVI—THICK BLOOD, OR, CLOTS OF BLOOD.

Mecca—19 Verses.

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Recite thou, in the name of thy Lord who created ;—

Created man from CLOTS of BLOOD :—

Recite thou ! For thy Lord is the most Beneficent,

Who hath taught the use of the pen ;—

Hath taught Man that which he knew not.

Nay, verily, Man is insolent,

Because he seeth himself possessed of riches.

Verily, to thy Lord is the return of all.

What thinkest thou of him that holdeth back

A servant of God when he prayeth ?

What thinkest thou ? Hath he followed the true Guidance, or enjoined Piety ?

What thinkest thou ? Hath he treated the truth as a lie and turned his back ?

What ! doth he now know how that God seeth ?

Nay, verily, if he desist not, We shall seize him by the forelock,

The lying, sinful forelock !

Then let him summon his associates ;

We, too, will summon the guards of Hell :

Nay ! obey him not ; but adore, and draw nigh to God.

The “servant of God” mentioned in the tenth line is Mohammed, and “him that holdeth back” is supposed to refer to Abu Jahl, who had threatened to set his foot on the Prophet’s neck when prostrate in prayer.

Following the first revelation there was a period of from six months to three years, as the time is variously estimated, during which the voices were not heard by the Prophet. This lapse, or intermission, is known as the *Fatrah*. During this period Mohammed was torn with doubts and misgivings, but there are no accounts of his occupation which are considered reliable. Mr. Muir says, “We can only gather with certainty that there was a time when his mind hung in suspense, and he doubted the divine mission.”

Moslem tradition says that while the Prophet was wandering about in the hills and near Mecca, distracted by doubts of his mission and burdened by his search for truth, he had a vision of the Angel Gabriel sitting on a throne between heaven and earth. He was so alarmed

by the sight that he ran to his wife Khadija and begged her to wrap him in his mantle as a shield from the glances of evil spirits. Thereupon the Angel Gabriel addressed him, and in the revelation that followed the Fatrah terminated and Mohammed received his divine commission. The revelation appears in the seventy-fourth sura of the Koran, of which the first seven lines only belong to the period in question:

O thou, ENWRAPPED in thy mantle !
 Arise and warn !
 And thy Lord—magnify Him !
 And thy raiment—purify it !
 And thy abomination—flee it !
 And bestow not favors that thou mayest receive again with increase ;
 And for thy Lord wait thou patiently.

VI. A FEW OF THE BRIEFER SURAS. The following, Sura 103, is called *The Afternoon* and is said to have been recited in the mosque by Mohammed shortly before his death :

I swear by the declining day !
 Verily, man's lot is cast amid destruction,
 Save those who believe and do the things which be right and enjoin truth and enjoin steadfastness on each other.

The following, Sura 113, is called *The Day-break*, and is one of the *preservative* chapters frequently engraved upon amulets and gems :

SAY : I betake me for refuge to the Lord of the DAY-BREAK,
 Against the mischiefs of his creation ;

And against the mischief of the night when it over-taketh me;

And against the mischief of women who blow on knots;

And against the mischief of the envier when he envieth.

Blow on knots is supposed to allude to some sort of charm or to the tangling of silken threads by blowing upon them, so the passage might be read, “against the mischief of those women who thwart the plans of men.”

Another *preservative* sura is entitled *Men* (Sura 114). The “whisperer” is Satan:

SAY: I betake me for refuge to the Lord of MEN,
The King of men,

The God of men,

Against the mischief of the stealthily withdrawing whisperer,

Who whispereth in man’s breast—

Against jinn and men.

Sura 101, *Of the Smiting*, is thus translated by Professor Palmer:

The smiting!

What is the smiting?

And what shall make thee know what the smiting is?

The day when men shall be like scattered moths; and the mountains shall be like flocks of carded wool!

And as for him whose balance is heavy, he shall be in a well-pleasing life.

But as for him whose balance is light, his dwelling shall be the pit of Hell.

And who shall make thee know what it is?—a burning fire!

Sura 88, *The Overwhelming*, is as follows:

Has there come to thee the story of the overwhelming?
Faces on that day shall be humble, laboring, toiling—

shall broil upon a burning fire; shall be given to drink from a boiling spring! no food shall they have save from the foul thorn, which shall not fatten nor avail against hunger!

Faces on that day shall be comfortable, content with their past endeavors—in a lofty garden where they shall hear no foolish word; wherein is a flowing fountain; wherein are couches raised on high, and goblets, set down, and cushions arranged, and carpets spread!

Do they not look then at the camel how she is created?

And at the heaven how it is reared?

And at the mountains how they are set up?

And at the earth how it is spread out?

But remind; thou art only one to remind; thou art not in authority over them; except such as turns his back and misbelieves, for him will God torment with the greatest torment.

Verily, unto us is their return, and, verily, for us is their account!

When Mohammed was taunted with the death of his sons as a mark of divine displeasure, he immediately received this revelation (Sura 108, *The Abundance*):

Truly we have given thee an ABUNDANCE;
Pray therefore to the Lord, and slay the victims.
Verily, whoso hateth thee shall be childless.

The following (Sura 97, *Power*) tells of the descent of the Koran on the night of Al Kadr:

Verily, we have caused IT to descend on the night of POWER,

And who shall teach thee what the night of power is?
The night of power excelleth a thousand months:

Therein descend the angels and the spirit by permission of their Lord for every matter;

And all is peace till the breaking of the morn.

Sura 82, *The Cleaving*, is a powerful warning against the day of judgment:

When the Heaven shall CLEAVE asunder,
 And when the stars shall disperse,
 And when the seas shall be commingled,
 And when the graves shall be turned upside down,
 Each soul shall recognize its earliest and its latest actions.

O man! what hath misled thee against thy generous Lord,

Who hath created thee and molded thee and shaped thee aright?

In the form which pleased Him hath He fashioned thee.

Even so; but ye treat the Judgment as a lie.

Yet truly there are guardians over you—

Illustrious recorders—

Cognizant of your actions.

Surely amid delights shall the righteous dwell,

But verily the impure in Hell-fire:

They shall be burned at it on the day of doom,

And they shall not be able to hide themselves from it.

Who shall teach thee what the day of doom is?

Once more. Who shall teach thee what the day of doom is?

It is a day when one soul shall be powerless for another soul: all sovereignty on that day shall be with God.

VII. QUOTATIONS FROM THE LONGER SURAS.
 As we have intimated, the chaotic arrangement of subjects in the longer suras is bewildering. Perhaps it will not make our impression of the Koran less accurate if we take our further specimens as we find them, and give them to the reader regardless of arrangement.

The Moslem prayer is given thus in the third sura:

“O our Lord!” *say they*, “thou hast not created this in vain. No. Glory be to Thee! Keep us, then, from the torment of the fire.

“O our Lord! surely thou wilt put him to shame whom thou shalt cause to enter into the Fire, and the wrong-doers shall have none to help them.

“O our Lord! we have indeed heard the voice of one that called. He called us to the faith—‘Believe ye on your Lord’—and we have believed.

“O our Lord! forgive us then our sin, and hide away from us our evil deeds, and cause us to die with the righteous.

“O our Lord! and give us what thou hast promised us by thine apostles, and put us not to shame on the day of the resurrection. Verily, Thou wilt not fail thy promise.”

The Sidrah-tree of Arabia is a prickly plum, One is fabled to stand on the loftiest summit of the highest heaven on the right hand of the throne of God. The leaves of this tree are as numerous as the members of the human race, and each leaf bears one person’s name. On the night of the fifteenth of the month of Ramadan each year the tree is shaken, and the leaves that fall from it bear the names of those who are to die during the coming year. Mohammed alludes to it in telling of a revelation he received from the Angel Gabriel:

With even balance stood he
In the highest part of the horizon :
Then came he nearer and approached,
And was at the distance of two bows, or even closer,—
And he revealed to his servant what he revealed.
His heart falsified not what he saw,
What! will ye then dispute with him as to what he saw!
He had seen him also another time,
Near the Sidrah-tree, which marks the boundary.

Near which is the garden of repose.
 When the Sidrah-tree was covered with what covered it,
 His eye turned not aside, nor did it wander:
 For he saw the greatest of the signs of his Lord.

Another prayer for the believer is this :

We hear and obey, Thy pardon, O Lord ! for to Thee our journey tends ; God will not require of the soul save its capacity. It shall have what it has earned, and it shall owe what has been earned from it. Lord, catch us not up, if we forget or make mistake ; Lord, load us not with a burden, as Thou hast loaded those who were before us. Lord, make us not to carry what we have not strength for, but forgive us, and pardon us, and have mercy on us. Thou art our Sovereign, then help us against the people who do not believe !

One of the numerous descriptions of the Moslem paradise is the following :

From the evil therefore of that day hath God delivered them and cast on them brightness of face and joy :

And *hath rewarded their constancy with PARADISE and silken robes :*

Reclining therein on bridal couches, nought shall they know of sun or piercing cold :

Its shades shall be close over them, and low shall its fruits hang down :

And vessels of silver and goblets like flagons shall be borne round among them :

Flagons of silver whose measure themselves shall mete.

And there shall they be given to drink of the cup tempered with zendjebil (ginger)

From the fount therein whose name is Selsebil (the softly flowing).

Aye-blooming youths go round among them. When thou lookest at them thou wouldest deem them scattered pearls ;

And when thou seest this, thou wilt see delights and a vast kingdom:

Their clothing, green silk robes and rich brocade: with silver bracelets shall they be adorned; and drink of a pure beverage shall their Lord give them.

The following verse is frequently found inscribed upon the interior walls of mosques. It is called the *Verse of the Throne*:

God, there is no god but He, the living, self-subsistent. Slumber takes him not, nor sleep. His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. Who is it that intercedes with Him save by His permission He knows what is before them and what behind them, and they comprehend not aught of His knowledge but of what He pleases. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and it tires Him not to guard them both for He is high and grand.

The thirty-sixth sura is named by the letters, *Ya Sin*; but it was called by Mohammed the “heart of the Koran.” In all Mohammedan countries it is recited to the dying and is repeated by pilgrims at the tombs of saints. The following are extracts from it:

Him only shalt thou really warn, who followeth the monition and feareth the God of mercy in secret: him cheer with tidings of pardon, and of a noble recompense.

Moreover, the dead earth is a sign to them: we quicken it and bring forth the grain from it, and they eat thereof:

And we make in it gardens of the date and vine; and we cause springs to gush forth in it;

That they may eat of its fruits and of the labor of their hands. Will they not therefore be thankful?

A sign to them also is the Night. We withdraw the day from it, and lo! they are plunged in darkness;

And the Sun hasteneth to her place of rest. This, the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing!

And as for the Moon, We have decreed stations for it, till it change like an old and crooked palm branch.

To the Sun it is not given to overtake the Moon, nor doth the night outstrip the day; but each in its own sphere doth journey on.

And the trumpet shall be blown, and, lo! they shall speed out of their sepulchers to their Lord:

They shall say, "Oh! woe to us! who hath roused us from our sleeping place? 'Tis what the God of Mercy promised; and the Apostles spake the truth."

But one blast shall there be, and, lo! they shall be assembled before us, all together.

And on that day no soul be wronged in the least: neither shall ye be rewarded but as ye shall have wrought.

SAY: He shall give life to them who gave them being at first, for in all creation is he skilled:

Who even out of the green tree hath given you fire, and lo! ye kindle flame from it.

What! must not HE who hath created the Heavens and the Earth be mighty enough to create your likes? Yes! and He is the skillful creator.

His command when He willeth aught, is but to say to it, BE, and IT IS. So glory be to Him in whose hand is sway over all things! And to Him shall ye be brought back.

What "Believers" should do may be inferred from the following indirect commandments:

Happy the BELIEVERS,
Who humble them in their prayer,
And who keep aloof from vain words,

And who are doers of alms deeds,
 And who restrain their appetites,
 And who tend well their trusts and their covenants,
 And who keep them strictly to their prayers:
 These shall be the heritors,
 Who shall inherit the paradise, to abide therein for ever.

This for the judgment-book:

And every man's fate have we fastened about his neck: and on the day of resurrection will we bring forth to him a book which shall be proffered to him wide open:
 —“Read thy Book: there needeth none but thyself to make out an account against thee this day.”

In Mohammed's opinion Christ was not crucified, but a substitute (tradition says it was Simon of Cyrene) was put upon the cross in the Savior's place. He has just said that a firestorm lay hold of the Hebrews when they asked that Moses show them God plainly, and that God has sealed them up in unbelief for various reasons, one of which is:

And for their unbelief—and for their having spoken against Mary a grievous calumny—

And for their saying, “Verily we have slain the Messiah, *Jesus* the son of Mary, an Apostle of God.” Yet they slew him not, and they crucified him not, but they had only his likeness. And they who differed about him were in doubt concerning him: No sure knowledge had they about him, but followed only an opinion, and they did not really slay him, but God took him up to Himself. And God is Mighty, Wise!

Of the Koran itself, and the reception which it met from unbelievers, Mohammed says in *The Night Journey* (Sura 17):

SAY: Verily, were men and jinn assembled to produce the like of this Koran, they could not produce its like, though the one should help the other.

And of a truth we have set out to men every kind of similitude in this Koran, but most men have refused everything except unbelief. And they say, "By no means will we believe on thee till thou cause a fountain to gush forth for us from the earth;

"Or till thou have a garden of palm-trees and grapes, and thou cause forth-gushing rivers to gush forth in its midst;

"Or thou make the heaven to fall on us, as thou hast given out, in pieces; or thou bring God and the angels to vouch for thee;

"Or thou have a house of gold; or thou mount up into Heaven; nor will we believe in thy mounting up, till thou send down to us a book which we may read."

SAY: Praise be to my Lord! Am I more than a man, an apostle?

But, finally, the keynote of the faith of Islam is the unity and omnipresence of God: "God's is the east and the west, and wherever ye turn there is God's face."

VIII. SOURCES OF THE KORAN. Mohammed drew from every source available in dictating the Koran. He drew upon the legends of his own people and of the Persians, and incorporated some of their mythology; he talked with the Hebrews and borrowed more extensively from the Talmud and apocryphal tradition than from what we recognize as the Old Testament. Yet he laid tribute on the New Testament and the Christian doctrines as he heard of them, and made them his own when it suited his convenience.

In fact, he never pretended to introduce or found a new religion, only to restore the old and only true faith as it was in the days of the Hebrew patriarchs. He respected the authority of the books of Moses, and while he denied the divinity of Christ he admitted his divine mission. Nor did he ask more for himself. He expressly denied for himself any divinity beyond that of an inspired prophet and teacher. "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet" was his fundamental doctrine, and that idea he obtained from Jewish tradition.

These facts we must remember. He created nothing new. He took the old dogmas, amplified and adapted them to the habits of his race; he suited ablutions to the warm climate in which he lived; in his requirements of daily prayers he was proposing nothing new; feasts, festivals, pilgrimages, the giving of alms were already established customs—he merely fitted them to his people.



AN ARAB CITY



CHAPTER IV

ISLAM

DEFINITION. The Arabic word *Islam* means *submission, resignation, humbling oneself to the will of God*. It is the right name for the religion taught by Mohammed, and it means complete submission of body and soul to God and a faithful observance of those articles of faith, commands and ordinances revealed to Mohammed and ordained by him. Islam was at one time the religion of all men, and all the prophets since Adam have preached it; but when wickedness and idolatry came into the world, the Moslems cannot agree. Every child is born in Islam, but the wickedness of the parents may lead it aside into native idolatry, Hebraism or Christianity.

II. "IMAN," OR FAITH. Beside the fundamental article of faith, which we stated above,

the Moslem believes in angels, genii or jinn; the prophets; in Heaven and Hell.

God resembles the God of the Christians in his qualities and attributes, except that "He begetteth not and is not begotten." Although Christ's birth was in a way divine, he was nothing but a prophet and was superseded by Mohammed as the Koran superseded the Gospel.

Angels, created of pure fire, stand between God and man, ministering to the former and interceding for and protecting the latter. Chief among them are Gabriel, the "holy spirit," or the "angel of the revelation;" Michael, special protector of the Jews; Azrael, or Raphael, the "angel of death;" and Israfil, or Uriel, the "angel of the resurrection."

The jinn, or genii, as the name often appears, are good and evil, but grosser than the angels and subject to death, all under the control of Solomon. Iblis, or Azazil, the chief of the jinn, refused to pay homage to God and was rejected by him. All the jinn have power to make themselves invisible, and they live in ruined cities, uninhabited houses, the bottoms of wells, in pools of water and in the waste places of the desert. Ghouls live upon the flesh of men and women whom they decoy into the desert, or upon the bodies of the buried, which they disinter for that purpose.

Only four of the more than a hundred God-given revelations survive, the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Gospel and the Koran; and the

three former only in a much falsified and mutilated condition. Six great prophets have been successively commissioned to proclaim new revelations: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed.

An angel meets the dead at the grave and announces the approach of two examiners who decide what shall be the fate of the soul while he is waiting the general resurrection. First must he enter upon the tenuous bridge Al Sirat, which stretches from earth to Paradise across the fathomless depths of Hell, slender as the thread of a famished spider, sharp as the edge of a sword, and beset with thorns on either side.

III. HEAVEN. The Mohammedan Heaven is a place of unalloyed delight, a methodless intermingling of the joys of the Jewish, Christian and Persian paradises, overspread with the vivid sensuality of the great Prophet. At the end of Al Sirat the soul is met by the black-eyed Houris—"Of a rare creation are the Houris, and we have made them ever virgins dear to their spouses and ever youthful." Not of common clay are they made, but of pure musk, free from all blemish, and they meet and hold their destined lovers in rosy bowers or in snowy pavilions formed of a single pearl. No matter at what age the being died, he is now in the prime of earthly vigor and so will remain. Even the soil of Paradise is musk, and saffron and pearls and hyacinths dot the landscape. Palaces of gold and silver

with jewel-laden rooms await the faithful, and round about are trees that, bending, place at the lips of the spirits fruits of such wondrous flavor and delicacy that no human imagination can describe them. Rivers of water and milk and wine and honey run through flowery banks of musk and camphor, over sands that are rubies and emeralds. In shady groves of stately trees the birds and Houris sing ravishing melodies such as human ear has never heard.

No pen can describe the joys of the believers, for no living being can realize them. The lowest and the meanest will have no fewer than eighty thousand servants and seventy wives, and if he desires children he will beget them and see them grow to maturity in an hour; seventy years will be required even to see all the servants, jeweled garments, crowns and other luxuries that belong exclusively to him.

IV. HELL. If the heaven of the Moslems is a place of perfect bliss, Hell is one of unmitigated terror and suffering. In reality there are seven hells, one lying below another, into which in order of depth are thrust Mohammedans, Jews, Christians, Sabeans, Persians, sun-worshippers and, lastly, into the seventh and nethermost, the hypocrites of every religion. Into this depth seventy thousand angels with seventy thousand halters drag the poor soul, where he is tortured and tormented by restless demons whose greatest enjoyment is inflicting cruelty and watching pain. The pain of Hell

is usually the pain of intense heat or intense cold in alternation; when the condemned are thirsty, boiling water will be given to drink; when cold, sandals of fire are bound upon their feet. Ez-zakkoum is a “tree which cometh up from the bottom of Hell; its fruits are as it were the heads of Satan; and lo, the damned shall surely eat of it and fill their bellies with it; then shall they have therein a mixture of boiling water. Like dregs of oil shall it boil up in their bellies; like the boiling of scalding water.”

V. “DIN,” OR PRACTICE. The practical part of Islam consists of the ritual, moral laws and general activities of Iman. The Koran is the source of all, but they are explained in the collections of moral and legal traditions called Sunna, which stands in about the same relation to the Koran that the Mishna holds to the Pentateuch. The chief religious duties of the Moslem are four—prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage. Beside these, it will be interesting to consider their festivals and the Sabbath, the more important prohibitory laws, ethics, and the position of women.

VI. PRAYER. Prayer, which is the “key to Paradise,” is performed only after purification, which on special occasions may mean a complete immersion of the body, but which always consists of a washing of face, ears, hands and feet up to the ankles, during which process the devotee usually repeats the 97th sura, which we quoted above. In the courtyard

of every mosque a pool is provided for the purpose. If water is not available, sand may be used in its place.

Five times a day the muezzin walks around the minaret of the mosque, calling aloud in his far-reaching, musical voice the summons to prayer: "God is most great. I testify there is no god but God. I testify that Mohammed is the Prophet of God. Come to prayer. Come to safety." Twice in the night similar calls are given for those who wish to make special devotions. About daybreak, about noon, in the mid-afternoon, at about sunset and at nightfall the regular calls are sounded, and then the faithful Mohammedans, wherever they may be, turn their faces toward Mecca and, kneeling upon a spotlessly-clean prayer rug, salute and repeat the prayer suitable to the occasion. In every mosque is a niche (*Mehrab*) which shows the direction of the Kaaba.

These prayers are never addressed to Mohammed, but through him or the other saints to the one God. Mohammedans are not idolaters. In fact, so fearful was Mohammed of idolatry that no believer is permitted to make an image of a living thing; nowhere about the mosques are there decorations, statuary or pictures drawn from life; and the hours for prayer are not *at* sunrise nor *at* sunset, lest there be temptation to worship the sun.

Wherever he may be at the time appointed, the pious Moslem says his daily prayers. But on Friday at the appointed time he proceeds



From Painting by Gérôme

THE MUEZZIN

FIVE TIMES A DAY THE MUEZZIN WALKS AROUND THE MINARET
SUMMONING THE FAITHFUL TO PRAYER.

to the mosque, performs his ablutions and, taking off his sandals before he crosses the threshold, proceeds into the great chamber and kneels with his face toward Mecca. He hears the Koran read, perhaps listens to a sermon, and then goes on his way rejoicing.

The reverence shown at the mosque at prayer time does not continue throughout the day. The doors are always open and people, unshod, may enter at will. Visiting unbelievers, having drawn over their shoes heavy slippers which the attendant at the door keeps in readiness, may enter and walk about and talk at will, while except at prayer time the believers may be seen in groups, talking or transacting business.

VII. ALMSGIVING. Originally royal alms were collected by the sovereign, but now almsgiving is altogether voluntary. But once every year the Moslem must give liberally of his substance, and at the end of the month Ramadan it is customary to make a present to the poor.

VIII. FASTING. From daybreak until sunset of every day in the month of Ramadan, every Moslem must refrain from eating, drinking, smoking and every unnecessary indulgence, but from sunset till daybreak he may enjoy himself. As Ramadan moves with the moon, it sometimes falls in the heat of mid-summer and causes great suffering; but if by reason of occupation or ill-health it is impossible to observe the fast at the legal time, another

month will do as well. If prayer is the key of paradise, fasting is the gate, "one-fourth part of the faith;" therefore there are very few Mohammedans who do not observe the fasts of Ramadan.

IX. PILGRIMAGE. Mohammed was opposed to pilgrimages, as they savored too much of the idolatrous practices of the unbelievers, but he was compelled to yield to the sentiment of his time and provide for one. Once in his life-time every Mohammedan must make his Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, or if that be impossible he must send a substitute who, however, receives no benefits from his vicarious labors. The usual time is the twelfth month of the Mohammedan year, at the beginning of which pilgrims collect in vast numbers near Mecca and then at a given time begin the performance of the ceremonies. The male pilgrim puts a woolen wrapper around his loins, another around his shoulders and with bared head and heel and instep he walks seven times around the Kaaba, beginning at the black stone. Later he runs between the two sacred mounts, and still later he stands in prayer till sunset on Mount Arafat. After visiting the spot where Mohammed stood in prayer till his face shone with holy light, the pilgrim throws seven stones at the three pillars to drive the devil away, makes sacrifices, shaves his head and cuts and buries his nails. At last, with some holy dust from the Prophet's tomb or water from the well Zemzem as a souvenir, he is free to return

home. Thereafter every pilgrim proudly prefixes the title *Hajji* to his name.

X. FESTIVALS AND THE DAY OF REST. Following the fast of Ramadan is a time of feasting, that lasts for three days. After the pilgrims perform their sacrifices follows another feast of longer duration. One day, Friday, in each week, is set apart as a day of rest, but it is not so strictly observed as is the Christian Sabbath. After a Moslem has attended service he is permitted to return to his daily labors if he does not feel that he can afford to remain idle all day.

XI. PROHIBITORY LAWS. A brief summary of the principal prohibitions laid by Islam upon believers may be not without interest.

Drinking of wine and intoxicating liquors is strictly prohibited, though of late years there has come to be some laxity in the observance of the rule. Blood, the flesh of hogs, and any other meat, fish or fowl, not killed with proper ceremony, may not be eaten. Games of chance may not be played, nor games of skill for stakes; the word of a gambler is not accepted under oath. Usury is condemned and the taking of interest discouraged. No good Mohammedan may have more than four wives and a certain number of concubine slaves. Marriage is contracted by a simple declaration before witnesses and the payment of the dowry, and divorce except under certain conditions is equally simple. Nevertheless, the laws of consanguinity are rigidly enforced, and un-

chastity is severely punished. Children must be supported, and the divorced mother of an infant must nurse it for two years, though the father pays the expense. Murder of a believer is punished by death, but manslaughter may be punished by a fine to the family of the deceased. There is no punishment for the killing of an infidel. The punishment for theft is extremely severe as prescribed in the Koran, but has been mitigated since; for the first offense, the cutting off of the right hand; for the second, the left foot; for the third, the left hand, and for the fourth, the right foot. Apostasy from Islam is punished by death after the offender has been warned three times, but blasphemy, "the sign of complete wickedness and corruption of soul," is punished at once by death.

XII. ETHICS. The ethical principles of Islam are scattered through the Koran, but taken in the aggregate they form a highly elevating creed. Falsehood, injustice, calumny, mistrust, suspicion, pride, mockery, avarice, prodigality and debauchery are condemned in no uncertain terms, while benevolence, liberality, frugality, sincerity, patience and endurance, forbearance, decency and truthfulness are regarded as virtues and followed as such. The wanton cruelty with which the Moslems pursued their marvelous career can only be considered as one of the results of the surprising and rapid spread of power over the East.

XIII. THE POSITION OF WOMEN. The position of women in Islam is the natural position of the Arab women, that of submission to the man. They are not so much ruled against as left without consideration. Mohammedanism is a religion for men, though the women may share in it. Heaven is for men, and the women contribute to their joys. Women may enter the mosques, but their presence is not thought conducive to worship on the part of the men, and their attendance is discouraged. They have some rights men are bound to respect, but it is because they have bound themselves to respect them.

XIV. MOHAMMEDAN SECTS. Scarcely was Mohammed dead when division crept in among his followers, as he had foreseen when he predicted: "My followers shall be divided into seventy-three sects, but only one of them shall be saved. The others shall perish." As time went on his prophecy was proved erroneous in only one respect—he underestimated the number. Sects were based on different readings of the Koran, on traditional utterances of the Prophet, on the reliance to be placed on the Sunna, and upon modifications of the creed as it met in conflict with other religions. New prophets appeared, claiming to be Mohammed himself or his divinely-appointed successor. Every country into which the religion penetrated produced its leaders, and now to understand the world faith of Islam would be the labor of a lifetime.

XV. Two LEADING SECTS. Almost immediately after the death of Mohammed, Islam was split in twain by the struggles concerning his successor. Primarily, then, there are two great sects in Mohammedanism, whose differences mark the nature of all the others. It may be said that every follower of Mohammed is either a Sunnite or a Shiite, whatever the minor sect to which he belongs.

The Sunnites. The orthodox sect which clings to the traditions of Islam as they were formulated after the death of the Prophet, and is satisfied with things as they were, is the Sunni sect, so called because its members are *traditionalists*. It is the conservative branch of the faith, and at first in the immediate successors to the Prophet it was supreme and ruled through the Ummayad dynasty. It is still the predominant party, is favored by the Ottoman Turks and outnumbers its opponents ten to one in the Mohammedan world.

The Sunnites have never been the advocates of a positive method of selecting the head of the Church, and many of its members would regard the fall of the Ottoman Sultan from his headship as a boon to the faith. In fact, the Sultan is only the political head of the Church, while the spiritual rule in the Turkish Empire centers in the Ulama, or theological lawyers, most of whom have come up through the colleges from the common people. From this body is appointed the Grand Mufti, or Sheikh-ul-Islam, the chief spiritual authority.

The Shiites. The Caliph Ali, of whom we have spoken before, and his descendants are regarded by the Shiites as the only legitimate successors to Mohammed, and in this respect they differ radically from the Sunnites. Even the Prophet himself never had such enthusiastic followers as Ali was able to inspire.

After Ali had been installed and the Umayad dynasty deposed, it seemed that the Shiites would become the sole rulers of Islam, but the Abbasids threw their power to the Sunnites, and the Shiites for various reasons split into innumerable factions, which still find representatives throughout the Mohammedan countries but which disagree so that they cannot unite against the ruling party. They are emphatically the radicals of Islam. They founded new states, established mystical secret societies and are to be found everywhere more or less patiently waiting in hope of union and political power.

Ali, who was the husband of Fatima, the famous daughter of the Prophet, became fourth Caliph in 656, on the murder of Othman, but Mohammed's favorite wife Ayeshah, with her following, made his rule a stormy one, although he captured her and her chief general in a succession of great battles. About five years after his accession he was treacherously murdered at Kufa by three Mohammedans of a different sect. His martyrdom, as it was called, raised him to a position even superior to that of Mohammed, and he is named in the

Shiite Creed along with God. Moreover, many of his followers teach that he is to reappear as the Hidden Iman; or El Mahdi, who will establish the millenium. Innumerable schisms arose from this idea, and the Mahdis, the Promised Ones, or Guided Ones, who have arisen and enjoyed a limited popularity and power have been many.



AN ARAB MERCHANT



CHAPTER V

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

THE FIRST FOUR CALIPHS. Under the vivifying influence of Mohammed, the Arabians were for the first time united under one creed and one scepter, and showed at once the virility of the race; but it was not immediately to be successful in its undertakings. The death of Mohammed threw affairs into confusion and raised dissensions among his followers. As he left no sons, there was a quarrel as to who should be his successor, but this terminated in 632, when Abu Bekr, his friend and the father of one of his favorite wives, Ayeshah, triumphed and assumed the title of Caliph, the Deputy of the Prophet of God. He carried war successfully against Babylonia and Syria and the Byzantine emperor.

Omar, the second Caliph, another father-in-law of Mohammed, added Egypt and Jerusalem to the Caliphate and assumed the title Emir-al-Muminin, Prince of the Faithful, a title retained by all succeeding Caliphs. Othman, son-in-law to Mohammed, was elected third Caliph; he widened the boundaries of Islam to an extraordinary extent, and included Persia and the greater part of the northern coast of Africa. His successor, Ali, the fourth Caliph, was elected by the people of Medina, and he and his son are revered by the great sect as second only to Mohammed. His reign was so filled with dissensions at home that he accomplished little in the advancement of Islam.

II. THE UMMAYADS. Mu'awiya, the governor of Damascus, claimed the Caliphate, fought with Ali and forced the abdication of his son, so that by 661 he had gained supreme power. He established the capital at Damascus and made the succession hereditary, thus founding the dynasty of the Ummayads, which ruled Islam until 752 and the Mohammedans of Spain until 1031.

Under the Ummayads Islam reached the summit of its power, extending its boundaries eastward to the Indus, through the northern part of Africa, over Spain and into France, where, however, in 732 at the decisive battle of Tours, Charles Martel, the "Hammer of God," forever checked the westward advance of the Moslem faith.

In the east the Ummayads after a glowing reign were faced, about the time of the battle of Tours, by insurrections headed by descendants of Ali, who in a long contest gained supremacy, though not without staining their records with torrents of blood from their fellow religionists. The uncle of the first Abbasid Caliph invited the remaining Ummayads to a conference and treacherously slew all but two; one went to Southeastern Arabia, where he and his successors were recognized as Caliphs and reigned locally into the eighteenth century. The other was Abderrahmen, who fled to Spain and founded the Caliphate of Cordova, of which we have spoken above.

III. THE ABBASIDS. The first Caliph of this dynasty signalized himself by his extreme cruelty and bloodthirstiness, but his successor, known as Al Mansur, was a liberal patron of the arts, though he persecuted the Christians severely. It was he who founded the city of Bagdad, on the Tigris River, and removed the seat of government to that place. It was built out of the ruins of two ancient cities and is said to have been very beautiful. Haroun Al Raschid, the famous Caliph of Arabian story, greatly improved it, connected the two sides by a bridge of boats and erected an elegant palace and a splendid court for his favorite wife. A hundred years later the Turks ravaged the city, and the old Caliphate was ended in 1252 by the Mongols under a grandson of Genghis Khan, whose descendants were in turn

expelled by Timur a little over a century later. Since then Bagdad has been the scene of frequent contests between Persians and Turks, but finally it rested in the hands of the latter, until taken by the Allies in the World War.

Turkish soldiers were first employed by the Caliph as body guards in the early part of the ninth century, and it was not long until they became extremely powerful and dictated the succession to the throne. Under such conditions the Caliphs rapidly lost their power, and by the middle of the tenth century they were sovereigns in name only, the real power being vested in the emirs, or barons, as they might be called. At the end of the tenth century the Fatimide dynasty established a Caliphate at Cairo, so there were three in existence, though the Caliph at Bagdad was usually recognized as the spiritual head of Islam. In 1258, after the Mongol conquest, the Caliph of Bagdad fled to Egypt, taking with him little more than his title and spiritual power, which he transmitted to his successors till the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the Turks conquered Egypt, carried the Caliphate to Constantinople and transferred the title of Caliph and the spiritual headship of Islam to their Sultan, who still claims to be the head of Islam, though some Mohammedans outside of Turkey deny the claim.

IV. THE MOORS. The people of Barbary in Northern Africa were the original Moors, a mixed race in which Arab blood became

dominant. When the followers of Islam in their victorious career to the west entered Spain they came from the northern coast of Africa and were consequently known as Moors, a word which grew into general use and established itself in Southern Europe as the name of Moslem invaders everywhere.

The real Moors were conquered by the Arabs early in the eighth century and entered Spain quite early in the eleventh century as ardent warriors for the Caliph of Cordova, and having overrun the country remained in power until they were thoroughly beaten by the King of Leon. Retiring to Granada, they built their beautiful palace of *Alhambra* and lived in grandeur there until driven finally from Spain by Ferdinand, in the year that Columbus discovered America.

V. THE SARACENS. Originally this name properly belonged to the Arabs of the deserts between Syria and Arabia, but as they embraced Islam and by their chivalry and prowess became among the foremost of the Mohammedan warriors, the name *Saracen* came to be applied to any Moslem, but more particularly to those who made against the Crusaders so valiant a defense of the Holy Land. It was this series of conflicts that exerted so profound an influence upon the history of Europe and which the student of literature finds constantly before him in whatever country of Europe his research leads him. The panorama of the Crusades yet thrills the world.

VI. ARABIAN ART AND ARCHITECTURE. It is a general rule to which Islam is no exception that a religion develops its own peculiar style of architecture. Until Mohammed established his creed there was no noteworthy architecture for the Arabs, and what is now known as Saracenic, Arabian or Moorish might more properly be called Mohammedan architecture.

At first the Moslems accepted the style of church which was in use in the country they conquered, and most of the early mosques were built like the basilicas of the Christians. But the demands of their religion were for something different, and courts, fountains, arcades, gateways, domes and minarets became characteristic of mosques everywhere; yet in all may be seen traces of local style. Large rounded domes, tall tapering minarets are the most conspicuous features from the outside, while within the rug-covered floors, the absence of seats and the peculiarity of the decorations attract most the attention of the Christian visitor.

To the Arabs or to Islam we are indebted for the pointed, the trefoil and quatrefoil arches, though all have been so incorporated in our own architecture that we rarely attribute them to their proper source. The most original feature of their invention, however, is the broad horseshoe arch so common in their mosques, palaces and gateways.

The Moslem interdict against images and representations of living things threw their artists upon designs based upon flowers, leaves

and geometrical figures for all decorative features. These are woven into most intricate forms and combined with the forms of letters in the style now generally known as arabesques. These figures are usually painted, though they may be carved in low relief, and with sentences from the Koran they form almost the only decoration of the interior of mosques.

The most famous piece of Moorish architecture is Alhambra, in Spain, a great fortress including a palace set upon a hill in the city of Granada. The wall is more than a mile in circuit, and the towers and buildings within must have been spacious, massive and extremely beautiful, to judge by the portions still standing. The Hall of the Ambassadors and the Court of the Lions contain the most exquisite examples of Moorish art, since the lightness and grace of the columns is unsurpassed and the rich oriental coloring has not been subdued by time.

VII. PRESENT STATUS. Under the influence of time Islam has lost much of its power, and the original tenets of its faith have become so modified in different countries that sometimes it is difficult to discern quickly the peculiarities which separate Islam from the local religions. However, judged by the number of its followers, Islam is powerful, and it is indeed fortunate for the world that the command to make war upon the infidel is no longer heeded, as was proved during the World War, when the German Emperor attempted to call out the

forces of the faithful. A "holy war" is one of the most terrible things that could happen, for there is still in the hearts of Islam the same fanaticism, the same disregard, or rather courting, of death, and the same fatalism that in so short a time after the death of Mohammed carried his religion over half the world.

The number of professing Mohammedans at the present time cannot be determined, but those in position to know best estimate it to vary from two hundred to two hundred fifty millions. Using the latter and speaking roughly, there are one hundred seventy millions in Asia; sixty-eight millions in Europe and perhaps a half million in the islands of the Pacific, including the Philippines.



A BYPATH IN BAGDAD



CHAPTER VI

ARABIAN LITERATURE SINCE THE TIME OF MOHAMMED

INTRODUCTORY. Mohammed was born at about the beginning of that period of more than five hundred years which in Europe is known as the Dark Ages. The ancient learning of the Greeks and Romans had been forgotten or had never been acquired by the Teutonic multitudes which had come from the north and finished the destruction of the Roman Empire. Although Charlemagne in the ninth century partially checked the descent into ignorance and founded schools that did much to elevate his people, yet in Southern Europe, where culture had once had its home, barbarism seemed likely to reclaim everything.

From the close of the eleventh to the close of the twelfth century was the period of the Crusades and the epoch at which chivalry reigned in its glory. Then when countless thousands of knights were forcing their way into the East to take the Holy Sepulcher from the infidel Saracens, Europe was brought forcibly into contact with the dominant minds of Islam and found there the culture of Greece and Rome combined with the great learning of the Arabs themselves. It is largely to the Mohammedans that we owe the preservation of learning during the Dark Ages and the reawakening of Southern Europe from her sleep of half a thousand years. So profound an influence had Arabian scholars upon the growth of modern scholarship in Europe that we must examine it more carefully.

II. THE ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY. One of the most famous libraries of ancient times was that founded by Ptolemy Soter in the Egyptian city of Alexandria. The stories of its contents cannot be relied upon, but it was stated to have at one time nearly three-quarters of a million of volumes, or rolls, containing all the classic literature of Egypt, India, Greece and Rome. However much we may discredit the figures, it is certain that the collection was enormous, and it is infinitely to be regretted that it could not have been preserved for us.

During the siege of Alexandria by Julius Caesar part of it was burned, but the books destroyed were largely replaced. In A. D. 391 a

mob of fanatical Christians began the destruction of the library, but much of it was saved until the year 641, when Amron, the equally fanatical general of Omar, completed the destruction by fire. Mohammedans began by destroying the classical learning which later they took infinite pains to recover and preserve.

III. UNDER THE UMMAYAD DYNASTY. The end of the Medina Caliphate and the establishment of the capital at Damascus, a city already to some extent permeated with the culture of Syria and Greece, forever destroyed the influence of the nomadic Arabs and placed the control of Islam in the hands of the dwellers in towns. The influence was at once seen in the attitude of the Moslems toward learning. The first Ummayad Caliph assembled at his court the scholars and leading scientists of his realm and began that system of encouragement and protection which brought the influence of Greek culture to bear directly upon the Arabs and which ultimately raised the department of letters to the highest rank.

The progress of Islam among the learned was not without violent opposition. It is said that the poet Al Akthal, who most feelingly celebrated the heroic deeds of the Ummayads, was one of the early Christians whose religion had become purely a formal observance tinged with such Persian rites as turning to the rising sun to pray. He persisted in wearing the cross upon his breast, even in Damascus, and when the Caliph tried to convert him to Islam he said,

"I consent, if I am allowed to drink wine and am exempt from fasting during Ramadan." To this he added this epigram: "I will never go about like an ass braying, 'Come to prayers,' but I will continue to drink the kindly liquor and prostrate myself when the sun rises." He also said of the Ummayads: "Terrible is their rage if they are opposed; most clement of men are they when victory is won."

The greater part of the literature of this epoch was poetry, and funeral elegies written by a woman are particularly famous. Hers was a life of bitter disappointment, for she was married by her parents to a mean and jealous man who tortured her shamefully. Her best elegies are on a lover who remained faithful to her in all manner of suffering and persecutions to the end of his life, though her early marriage had cut off any hope of his union with her.

Prose works, however, appeared, and the beginnings of history and science may be traced to this epoch. All the compositions of this age were delivered orally by the authors to listening groups, and many were learned and passed from mouth to mouth to become an integral part of the language of the race. Readers of manuscripts were not numerous in those days.

IV. UNDER THE ABBASIDS. Learning, under the Abbasids, received an amount of encouragement which was but feebly anticipated by what the Ummayads had done. Even Al Mansur, the

second Caliph, who came to power by treachery and murder and who was infamous for his cruelty and inhuman persecutions of the Christians of Syria and Egypt, contradicted himself by his patronage of learning. Among other accomplishments he secured the translation of Euclid into Arabic and brought the fables of the Persian Bidpai into the language of his followers. The conquest of Persia was so complete, in fact, that their written language ceased to exist, but the Aryan genius finding a new outlet in Arabic welded itself to Islam, forming no inconsiderable factor in the literary growth of the Moslems.

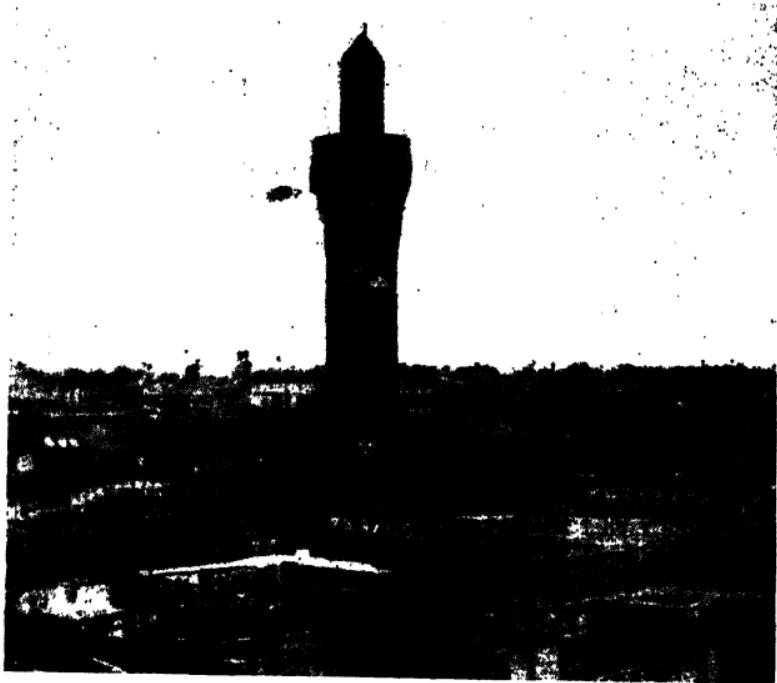
During all their long reign in the East and their longer rule in Spain, the Abbasids did not entirely cease to foster learning, but they gradually reduced its scope to a prescribed scholasticism. If sometimes this "protection" was forcible and tormenting, to say the least, we must not judge the caliphs by our own standards. Even the famous Haroun Al Raschid threw a poet into prison and starved him to make him write the poetry of which he was thought capable. But we must consider the extended period more closely.

V. HAROUN AL RASCHID. Haroun, or Harun, whose surname was Al Raschid, the Just, and who is the most renowned of the Abbasid caliphs, came to the throne in 786, when he was little more than a boy. About his name will always cling the halo cast by the *Arabian Nights* stories; but he was an Abbasid ruler,

with all their cruelty and rapacity tempered by a love for elegance, ease and culture. Little did he concern himself with the cares of state, but passed the control of everything into the hands of Yahya, a member of a Persian family, the Barmecides, whose father had been the tutor of the Caliph Haroun. Yahya had four sons, one of them, Jarfar, the most intimate personal friend of Haroun, the companion of the Caliph in those democratic nocturnal wanderings in disguise, of which the *Arabian Nights* tells us so much.

The Barmecides ruled the Caliphate wisely if not always in a kindly way, and gave to Haroun the leisure he demanded for indulging in his eccentric pastimes. After a time, however, Haroun grew jealous of the popularity of Jarfar, and caused the whole family to be executed, their property to be confiscated and even forbade the mention of the name. This wholesale slaughter was the beginning of his downfall, for he knew nothing of the practical measures of ruling. Dissensions sprang up on every side, and his power was in imminent danger of overthrow, when he died in 809, on an expedition against some of his rebellious subjects.

But Haroun made Bagdad the greatest, most elegant and most learned city of his time. He built extravagantly and spent enormous sums in beautifying his favorite palaces. He brought learned men from every corner of his realm and established them at his capital, where they were supported comfortably and



BAGDAD

UNDER HAROUN AL RASCHID BAGDAD WAS A CITY OF ELEGANCE
AND LEARNING, OF WHICH NOT A SHADOW REMAINS.

given the highest honors if they but sustained the reputation they had gained when he discovered them. It is said that wherever he traveled he carried with him a hundred sages to entertain him with their wisdom. He founded schools wherever he built mosques, established libraries and gave munificently to the support of everything he felt would increase the renown of his favorite city.

The Barmecides alone would demonstrate the tremendous Persian influence which now made itself felt in Arabian politics, and in literature it was no less. The native Arabs ceased to write, and the greatest poets, theologians, legists and scholars of all descriptions were Persians educated in Arabic, which from that time to the present has remained the sole language of the vast empire of Islam. So in thinking of Arabian literature we must always remember that while it is literature in the Arabic tongue, it may be written by a descendant of any one of the peoples who were flung into the great melting pot of Islam. Only the Aryan Persians had the strength at a later date to recover their lost tongue and recreate their literature.

Quaint stories are told of the writers of that epoch, and satirical epigrams upon them are as numerous as bombastic eulogies. One stingy poet comes to court dressed in coarse cotton and sheepskin, and another says of him: "He has no zeal for pleasure; he is jealous only of the cooking pots." Of one poet, the

son of a weaver, another says: "Where could I find a more degraded being than thy father? Yes, one lower there is, thyself! For many a day he wove cloaks as evil as thy verses!" A satirist who wrote the *Book of the Arabs' Faults* was so detested that when he died from eating a poisoned banana, not a person followed his coffin to the grave, an almost unheard of thing in the East.

The *Book of the Horse* is a famous work of that time. Every part of the horse is given its Bedouin name and a verse of poetry is quoted about it. A rival of the author boasted that he had a similar treatise in fifty volumes, but when asked by a Vizier to name the parts he was puzzled and took refuge in the remark, "I am not a horse-doctor." Thereupon the writer of the single volume stepped up to the noble animal the Vizier was riding and placing his hand here and there upon the horse named all the parts and quoted appropriate verses about them. This so pleased the Vizier that he presented the poet with the beautiful beast, and thereafter its new owner lost no opportunity to ride by his defeated rival and sneer at him.

VI. AL MAMOUN. The Caliph Al Mamoun, the son of Haroun, had the best tutor obtainable and seemed to have inherited all his father's love of learning with an even greater desire to promote it. He founded in Bagdad the first university and made it the parent of others in all parts of his broad realm. Be-

sides bringing thither all the able poets, scientists and prose writers of whom he could learn, he levied upon the conquered provinces everywhere a heavy toll of all their important books and literary treasures. These were deposited in his university, and scholars were set to work to translate them. He himself was an accomplished mathematician and the instigator of many scientific projects.

While he protected and encouraged men of learning, he was no less harsh than his predecessors in exacting the best that was in them. Moreover, he was jealous of his own reputation, and when he detected in one case a neglect of proper credit, he sent out soldiers in pursuit of the offending poet, who was caught in Syria and brought back to Bagdad. Here the Caliph ordered his tongue to be torn out, and the wretched man was left to die of the hemorrhage.

Al Mamoun was so displeased by the satire of another poet that he ordered him to be fastened naked to a cross for a whole day. Of this the sufferer said, "It was no unknown man, nor person of inferior merit who was crucified on Monday. By this they satisfied their vengeance. But thanks be to God! their victim was a man of honor and worthy of respect." "The enmity of a man without honor or religion is an affliction which has no equal, for he leaves you his own reputation, while he attacks yours, which you have so carefully guarded." As he was dying from wounds received in battle, he still whispered in poetic measure: "Has

the darkness of night deepened? Has the torrent swept away the more? I think of the people in Bagdad, but how far are they removed from me!"

On the other hand, Al Mamoun was greatly delighted by the answer given him by a scholar, of whom he had asked, "Is there anything better in life than this great musical gathering of ours?" The musician replied, "Yes. There are those thanksgivings which we owe God for the signal favor he has shown you in permitting this gathering!"

Again, in pardoning a rebellious relative Al Mamoun is said to have remarked, "If it were understood what pleasure I feel in granting pardon, all who have offended against me would come to me and confess their faults!"

VII. UNIVERSITIES AND LITERARY CENTERS. Mention must be made of Bassora and Kufa, which early became rivals of Bagdad as productive centers of literature, while Balkh, Ispahan and Sarmakand were thriving homes of science; Cairo, too, and the towns of Morocco and Fez boasted their magnificent buildings housing flourishing schools and serving as depositories of precious volumes from every quarter. While Europe was shrouded in the night of ignorance the light of learning shone brilliantly in all these centers which, when the time was ripe, furnished the revivifying torch.

Perhaps to Cordova, however, Europe is more directly indebted. Her academy with its more than a dozen branches in the cities of

Spain was in the tenth and eleventh centuries second only in importance to Bagdad at a slightly earlier date. Libraries were established throughout the peninsula, and more than seventy are known to fame. French and other European students, particularly those who were interested in mathematics and medicine, visited these schools and libraries, and the number of Spanish authors who wrote in Arabic was prodigious in almost every department of knowledge.

Vast quantities of Arabic manuscripts which have never been translated still exist in the hands of the monks and the royal libraries of Europe, but the tide of progress has passed them by, and though some scholars still work upon them it is not probable that anything further will be found that will materially affect the future of our literature.

VIII. DEATH OF ARABIC LEARNING. After the fall of Bagdad, in the middle of the twelfth century, the decay of learning hastened to rapid extinction, and the comparatively brief period of brilliance gave way to final darkness. Marvelous as the growth and spread of Arabic culture was, its sudden check and extermination are little less remarkable. The prodigious force spent itself, and now over the whole extent of the vast territories occupied by the Mohammedans ignorance is the rule. The scholars of Islam are erudite only in the knowledge of the Koran. Her knowledge of science is borrowed; her history forgotten; her poetry

neglected. Whatever treasures remain of her period of glory are in the hands of her enemies. Here and there, it is true, there are slight revivals, but the crushing hand of the Turk or the ignorance and rapacity of native rulers seem combined to destroy all germs of new thought. But we may profitably turn once more to the golden age of her culture and examine more closely what was accomplished by the great scholars of Islam.

IX. POETRY. To the Arab poetry was as the breath of his nostrils, and it is probable that there have been more Arabian poets than all the other countries united have produced. Yet there is little that has ever had any vital influence upon us. Of epics there are none. The genius of the Arab ran to lyrics, eulogies of distinguished men, elegies for their favorite dead, love poems without number, moral and religious songs and didactic poems extending even into the arid domains of arithmetic, rhetoric and grammar. Nothing dramatic was attempted except in lyric form, and we have the curious spectacle of a great body of poetry but never a tragedy nor a comedy.

To the Arab the classic poetry of the Greeks was cold, timid and unsatisfactory. The wild blood in his veins demanded bold figures of speech, excessive hyperbole and extravagance in qualifying words. The poets often buried their thought under the richness of their style and piled beauty on beauty, as they loaded their favorite wives with jewels. Of the real senti-

ment that we so much admire, the Arab felt little appreciation, though in his love poems and in his elegies may be detected a depth of feeling that is only partially concealed by the ornateness of expression. It is poetry of passion, but passion revealing itself in extravagance, an extravagance which makes itself felt even in structure of the verses, which rhyme like ours, but more fully, the recurrent sounds sometimes running through the whole composition.

X. FICTION. Arabian fiction is characterized by the same wealth of imagery which is seen in poetry, but combined with a bewildering fertility of the imagination which has left the Western reader aghast at the results. Recognizing an unlimited prerogative, the Arab writer brings in the magical and the occult, and peoples his story with angels, demons and genii as freely as with human beings. Nothing is too extraordinary to relate with a sober face; it is romance carried to the *n*th degree! Yet withal there is so much wit and intelligence, such fascinating plot and such bewildering incidents that the attention of every reader of discernment is enthralled completely.

The Arab has not produced many long novels; his forte is that of a teller of brief tales, a writer of short stories. Many collections of these exist, but the one best known to Western readers is the incomparable *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*.

XI. "ARABIAN NIGHTS." Who wrote these wonderful tales is unknown, and where they originated or at what time they were produced cannot be told. That some at least of the stories originated in India is probable, and that many others made their first appearance in Arabic in their present framework as a translation from the Persian is indicated by the names of the characters as well as some of the incidents. There is a strong resemblance to Egyptian tales in all of them, and the manners and customs resemble those of Egypt more than of Arabia. Then from time to time tales were added, possibly some as late as the sixteenth century, such as the stories of Bagdad and the Caliph Haroun Al Raschid, and more recent ones from Cairo, and so on till the completed collection seems to have drawn upon the lore of all the Eastern world.

Early in the eighteenth century Antoine Galland, a French orientalist, made a translation of the collection into his native tongue and thus introduced to European readers one of the most popular of the world's classics. It soon found its way into English, and to-day there is scarcely a reader, young or old, who is not familiar with Aladdin, Sinbad and a host of characters that move among us clothed in the magical colors of the Orient. They bring with them the very atmosphere of medieval times and touch the most torpid imagination with a fairy wand. Everything is seen from the far side, from the standpoint of Islam in conflict

with Christianity; the East against the West. Bagdad and Damascus, Bussorah, Cairo and Tripoli, with their magnificence and squalor, their wealth and their poverty; the rule of Oriental despots who cut off a man's head for a whim or smother an offender in oil with a careless abandon that robs the act of its apparent cruelty; all are pictured in the gay colors of sunny climes. Life and animation are everywhere. Endless caravans bearing the wealth of the Indies cross trackless deserts and deposit their costly burdens in the bazaars where bejeweled women, ravishingly beautiful as the Houris of the Mohammedan heaven, decorate themselves with barbaric splendor. The beauties of nature, lavish as they are, pale before the gorgeousness which limitless wealth can purchase. Imagination runs riot; there is nothing to restrain; genii build magnificent palaces in the twinkling of an eye; distance is annihilated, space is conquered; the whole earth pays tribute.

For a thousand and one nights Scheherezade reels off the fascinating stories to her lord, the jealous Sultan. It is a matter of life and death to her, for her lord and master has slain wife after wife on the morning after the wedding, and the brave Scheherezade has undertaken to cure him of his cruel pastime. With consummate art she breaks off her narrative every morning at so exciting a juncture that the murderous Sultan must postpone his daily killing to hear the conclusion of the tale. But it

ends in the night, and the charming story-teller plunges forthwith into another dazzling narrative which cannot be terminated till a second day has intervened. A character is introduced and begins a tale which calls for a story from another and his from a third. Not until the third has completed his recital can the second finish; the end of the second narrative enables the first to be completed, and not till then is Scheherezade enabled to start a new series. This remarkable involution is carried out with matchless skill. When at last the Sultaness finishes her thousand and first night her jealous lord has forgotten his pique, and the blood-letting is forever terminated.

Many an author has devised a frame into which he placed a number of unrelated stories, as for instance, the framework of a pilgrimage to a religious shrine into which Chaucer wove his *Canterbury Tales*, but none is quite so intricate as this early Arabian work of an unknown author. It does not matter so much what was the source of each tale, but we may be sure that the majority were related over and over again at the coffee houses of Oriental cities by spirited story-tellers who charmed fresh audiences daily with these fantastic creations of a florid imagination. Now they have traversed the globe, and their influence is seen everywhere in the literature of Southern Europe and is by no means excluded from the writings of our own people, as we shall see as we progress in these studies.

The tales are published separately and in collections, more or less ambitious, often without the framework. Two or three times has the complete work appeared in English, notably in the sixteen volumes of Burton; but it finds few readers, as a literal translation of all the tales seriously offends our ideas of decency and propriety. There are a number of single-volume editions of the *Arabian Nights*, however, that contain the framework and all that are worth while of the thousand and one tales.

XII. SCIENCE AND INVENTION. Our debt to the Arabs in the domain of science and invention is much heavier than most people are aware. They found paper in use in Asia and introduced it into Europe. They knew the use of the magnetic needle in a compass as early as the eleventh century, while it was not "invented" in Europe until the thirteenth; they used gunpowder for at least a century before it was known to the German chemist who "discovered" it; they introduced the decimal system into arithmetic, modified the Hindu numerals and gave them to us in the form in which we now utilize them; they simplified the processes of trigonometry, gave general applications to algebra and made many an important discovery in astronomy. Many of their terms we use in our daily speech; as, for instance, *algebra*, *alcohol*, *zenith*. While their chemistry never separated itself entirely from the magic of alchemy, yet they discovered many of the properties of substances and chem-

ical processes for handling them, beside introducing into Europe the study which after ages purified itself from superstition and magic.

Avicenna, who was born in 980, became one of the great physicians of all time, and if he made few original discoveries he collected and digested the knowledge of the Greeks and made it available to his followers. As late as the end of the sixteenth century he was regarded by the schoolmen as an authority on many matters.

The Arabs made great progress in practical agriculture and amassed a considerable amount of knowledge of soil, climate and the growth of plants, which in time they distributed in those countries whose inhabitants had the temperament and intelligence to use it.

But we cannot take more space to give what must in the end be a very inadequate list of their accomplishments. We might sum it all up by saying what we have previously said: The Mohammedans were the greatest distributors of knowledge the world knew up to the time of the discovery of America, and for five hundred years or more they made most of the progress that was effected in the world.

XIII. HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY. History may be said to have been cultivated by the Arabs from the time the Ummayads secured the Caliphate, and by the eighth century it was a highly-important department in the literature of Islam. Historians wrote not only of the spread of their faith and the Arab race, but

they produced an infinite number of lives of their famous men; many histories of every science and manner of invention, of the horse and of the camel, and then made dictionaries of history and anthologies of history almost without number. In contrast to that of the teller of tales, the historian's style was plain and unadorned.

The Arabian philosophers were followers of Aristotle, into whose mysteries they delighted to delve and always returned with still greater mysteries and more dazzling speculations. The Arab philosopher had the imagination of his race and enjoyed better the fanciful results of vivid invention than the coldly intellectual processes by which moderns arrive at their conclusions. Nevertheless, the influence of Arabian philosophy upon Europe of the Middle Ages was greater than that of any other department of its literature, and it was centuries before thinkers emancipated themselves from its magic trammels.

Avicenna, whom we have mentioned as a physician, and more especially Averrhoes, who was born in Cordova in 1149, are the great lights in Arabian philosophy. The latter was a devout follower of Aristotle and was much persecuted by orthodox Moslems because of the liberality of his views. His works were translated into Latin and as early as the thirteenth century became important in the Christian Church, though many of his doctrines were repudiated as erroneous.

The theology of Islam was by no means neglected, and there are commentaries without number upon the Koran, then commentaries on the commentaries, and so on, as freely as ever the Chinese overhauled the sayings of Confucius. As the Koran is the source of Mohammedan religion, law and politics and pretends to regulate so largely the habits and customs of those who believe in it, the wide expanse covered by the commentators can easily be imagined.

XIV. PHILOLOGY AND RHETORIC. The language of the Arabs was made the subject of minute study, and grammars, rhetorics and dictionaries abound. *Al Sehah* (Purity) and *El Kamus* (The Ocean) are still relied upon, the latter being considered the best dictionary in the language. To make a perfect language was the ideal of Arabic grammarians, and in following out the idea they reduced their syntax and prosody to a rigid system, availing themselves of all the knowledge which the Greeks had previously incorporated in their works. A good style became the greatest desideratum of writers, and readers became correspondingly critical.

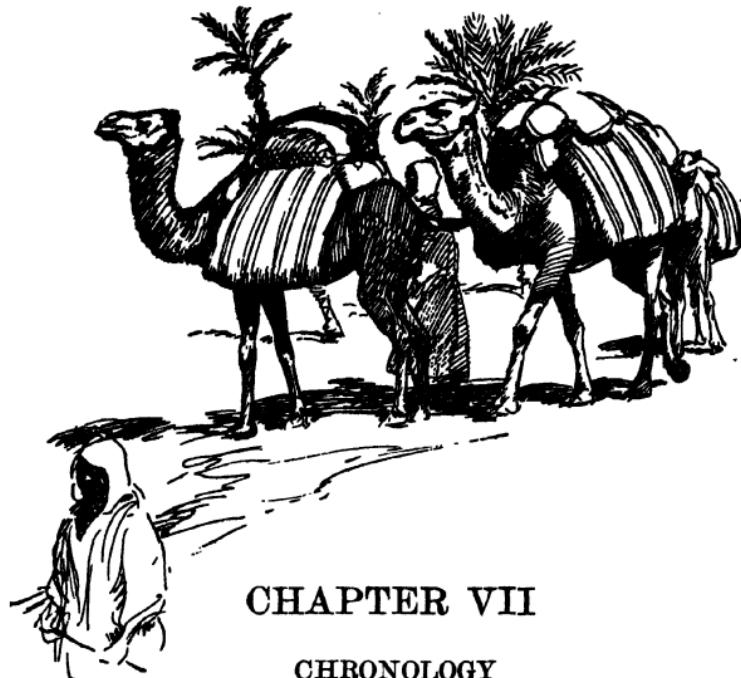
Of oratory on miscellaneous subjects there was very little, but many of the sermons delivered from the pulpits of Islam were models of construction and eloquence.

XV. CONCLUSION. As we look back after reading this brief discussion of Arabian literature it seems a pity that so much labor of so

infinitely painstaking a character should be lost to the race that produced it. To account satisfactorily for the marvelous upheaval is impossible, but we can see that the decay of the old religion and the vivifying influence of Jews and Christians might open the way for a new religion. We can understand that the sensuous delights of Mohammed's Heaven and the awful punishments of his Hell should make converts of his hearers. When they became believers the feeling that war was an act of faith and death meant reward was a sufficient impetus to move the Moslem soldiers to victory over the disorganized and unfaithful Christian world and that widespread additions to territory were inevitable. The contradictory spirit that fostered learning while it reveled in the murder of Christians, infidels and opponents of all classes is less easy to understand. To explain how that, after five hundred years of almost unlimited power, the religion of Islam should lose its glory, that ignorance should take the place of scholarship and power fall from nerveless fingers is the labor of the scholar.



A SHEPHERD



CHAPTER VII

CHRONOLOGY

FOR purposes of comparison, a limited chronology, or table of dates, is always helpful.

Native Arab poets flourished for centuries before the time of Mohammed, but their names and their works are all but forgotten, if we except those of *The Pleiades*, whose poems may date back to the sixth century. Beginning with Mohammed:

570 (?)—Birth of Mohammed.

622—The Hegira.

632—Death of Mohammed.

632—Abu Bekr, first Caliph.

641—Alexandrian Library burned by Amron.

661—Ummayad Caliphate established.

732—Battle of Tours.

752—End of Ummayad Caliphate, except in Spain.

752—Beginning of Abbasid Caliphate.

762—Bagdad founded by Al Mansur.

809—Death of Haroun Al Raschid.

972—Fatimide Caliphate established in Cairo.

980—Avicenna born.

1031—End of Ommeyads in Spain.

1096—First Crusade begun.

1149—Averrhoes born.

1171—End of Fatimide Caliphate.

1248–1354—Building of Alhambra.

1258—Caliph of Bagdad fled to Egypt.

1492—Alhambra captured by Spanish.



AN ARAB WARRIOR

PERSIA



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE COUNTRY. Persia, known to the natives as Iran, lies in the southwestern part of Asia, northeast of the Persian Gulf and south of the Caspian Sea, with Turkey on the west and Afghanistan and Baluchistan on the east. It is the most extensive and the most

powerful native kingdom in that part of Asia and has had a remarkable history. In shape it is an irregular rectangle, with a length out of proportion to its width, and covers an area of about six hundred thirty-five thousand square miles, which support a population of about ten million.

A large part of the country is an unproductive, inhospitable desert, but there are valleys of great fertility. In general, it is a high table-land, level, and covered with arid salt-encrusted plains and saline lakes, in parts, or broken by numerous mountain ranges elsewhere. Rivers are short and numerous, but of little importance, except in irrigation, for which they have been lavishly used for centuries.

The climate is what the elevation, latitude and soil make it, and the description of the younger Cyrus is literally true: "The people perish with cold at the one extremity of the country, while they are suffocated with heat at the other." Along the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman the heat is intense, especially in the autumn, on the desert plateau there are wide extremes of heat and cold, while in the more fertile regions the climate is mild and equable. The Caspian provinces, low and in many parts unhealthy, are in such a great depression that the climate is much warmer than the latitude would indicate.

The fertility of the soil under irrigation is remarkable, but centuries of war, oppression



PERSIAN NOMADS AND TENTS
IN THE HIGH TABLE-LANDS LIVE THE NOMADIC TURKOMANS, ARABS AND KURDS.

and misrule have depauperated Persia and reduced its output far below its possibilities. Nevertheless, Persian wheat is considered the best in the world; the other cereals are excellent crops; cotton is easily grown in abundance; mulberries flourish; the production of silk is one of the large industries; and rice and tobacco are raised in large quantities.

II. THE PEOPLE. Farmers, merchants, artisans and the bulk of the town-living population are the Tajiks, mixed descendants of the ancient Persians. They were originally Aryans, and under favorable conditions are an extremely capable, industrious and peaceful race, but they have been so tormented by ages of foreign oppression that they are rather servile, tricky and cunning.

The nomadic tribes are Turkomans, Arabs and Kurds, with an intermixture of pure Persian blood. All are warlike peoples and inveterate robbers whose forays have kept the more settled inhabitants in constant terror.

III. RELIGIONS. The Tajiks are nearly all Mohammedans, but a few have embraced Christianity and another small number still cling to the pure faith of the Parsees. The nomadic tribes as a whole profess the Sunni creed. Our inquiry concerns itself with the Persian proper, the Tajik of to-day, and it is his history and his literature that are important to the world.

IV. HISTORY. The early history of Persia is still largely a matter of conjecture, though

new light is being thrown upon it from time to time as the remarkable labors of our Orientalists result in further deciphering the records that from time to time appear. Our first accounts came from the Greeks, whose annals begin to tell of the Persians of Northwestern Iran, then known as the Medes, about seven hundred years before Christ. The Persians have, however, in the *Shah-namah* an account which purports to extend some thousands of years further back, and by which possibly we may in time be able to extract some of the truth from the fables, traditions and mythological detail that encumber the story.

Cyrus the Persian, who died in 529 B. C., overthrew the Medes, who had subdued the Assyrians at an earlier date and established the great empire which his cruel son Cambyses ruled for a few years only, to be followed after a brief interval by the wise and energetic Darius Hystaspes, who solidified the Empire, extended its bounds to include Thrace and Macedonia, but failed to conquer Greece, in two attempts, the latter being terminated by the famous battle of Marathon (490 B. C.). His son Xerxes continued the contest against Greece, but was so badly defeated at the battles of Salamis and Plataea that thereafter he was capable of only a defensive warfare. This was the beginning of the decay of the vast Empire which at one time covered Southwestern Asia as far east as the Indus, and was the greatest power on the continent.

Then the tide of conquest ebbed and was thrown backward by the great onrush of the Macedonians, who overwhelmed the Persians and incorporated them in the huge world-empire of Alexander the Great, which at his death in 324 b. c. was too large and unwieldy for any one but himself. Of the four parts into which it was divided, Persia belonged to the one which came under the rule of the Seleucidae who, however, were unable to preserve their possessions intact for any great length of time.

After a long period of wars, dissension, devastating frays and frequent changes of government, Ardashir I, son of Papakan, became King, and about A. D. 218 founded the family of Sassanidae, under whom the Persians re-established themselves and reached a height of power and wealth that made them the only people capable of a successful resistance against the powerful arms of the Romans.

This great dynasty held the reins of government until the Arabs in A. D. 633 overran the country and began that oppressive rule which destroyed the carefully-built civilization, laid waste the irrigated lands and reduced the Persians to such a state of weakness and despair that they remained the prey of successive dynasties of invaders, who have harried them into their present state of moral dependency.

It is true that under the Mohammedan Abbasids, when the capital of Islam had been removed to Bagdad and Khorassan had become

the favorite province of the Caliphs, Persia was regarded as the center of the Caliphate, and her scholars, abandoning their native tongue, took up Arabic, and her natural leaders became the backbone of Islam, as we have seen in the Barmecides under Haroun Al Raschid.

Near the close of the eighteenth century Persia became entangled with Russia, and a series of wars and treaties extended the southern boundary of the latter country so as to include many a square mile of Persian territory. In 1848, after interference on the part of Russia and England, Mohammed Shah ascended the throne. Thereafter England, who was interested by reason of the encroachments of Russia and her own possessions in India, took her turn in fighting with Persia until after several wars and counter wars boundaries were established that were hoped to be permanent. In 1873 the Shah of Persia visited Europe and was received everywhere with flattering attention.

The later history of Persia is one of internal confusion, with England, Russia and Germany exercising influence that varied in importance from time to time. Since 1914 the Shah has ruled with the assistance of a Cabinet, restricted by a parliamentary body. English influence is now dominant.

V. LANGUAGE. As has been said, the Persians are Aryans; their language belongs to the great Indo-European family and has many

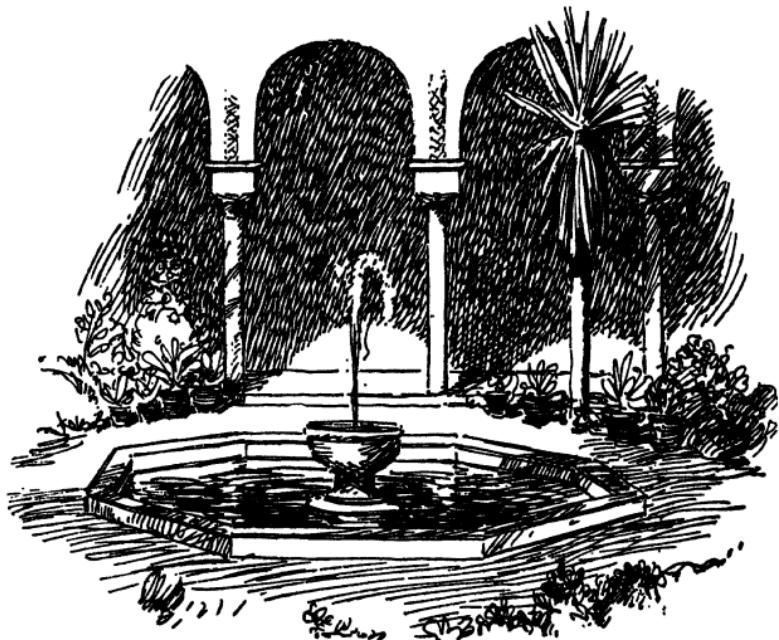
affinities with our modern tongues and with Sanskrit. During the long and varied history of this remarkable people there have been many idioms and dialects, and four varieties at least are of importance, each of which must be considered separately.

1. *The Zend.* The Zend is that ancient language of the Persians in which the great sacred books of Zoroaster are written. It is a genuine Aryan language, closely related to Sanskrit, Greek and Latin, and in its pure form was rich, highly inflected and copious in its vocabulary. From an unknown age it was spoken in the northern part of Persia, but died out as a colloquial language long ago. As it disappeared from speech its peculiarities were forgotten, and gradually corruptions crept into the copies of the books, especially as they were frequently made by unlearned people. The result was that no pure standard of the Zend was left, and scholars are still laboring to disinter the original from the mass of deteriorated writings. It is written from right to left in separate characters.

2. *Pahlavi.* This idiom, the "language of heroes," was in use principally during the reign of the Parthian kings and the Sassanidae, who desired to reinstate the original Persian which practically had been lost since the time of Alexander. It is written from right to left, and the letters are joined. The Pahlavi is much less rich in its inflections, but it has a copious vocabulary taken largely from the western

provinces and hence incorporating a great many Semitic words. It is much nearer to modern Persian than the Zend.

3. *Modern Persian.* After the Mohammedan conquest, Arabic became the strongest element in the Persian language and has made from the language in use at that time the various dialects that constitute modern Persian. To the Arabic alphabet the Persians have added four letters and three points to make it conform to their own phonetics.



A COURTYARD



CHAPTER II

ZOROASTER AND HIS RELIGION

HIS NAMES. The great prophet and lawgiver of ancient Persia was known as Zoroaster, or Zarathustra, a name which was altered by the later Parsees and Persians into Zerdusht. In the records he is rarely mentioned without his family name, Spitama. When he spoke of himself it was as "Mantran" (reciter of Manthras), "the messenger of Ahuramazda;" "the speaker;" "one who listens to the voice of Nature's oracles;" "he who receives through flames the voice of Ahuramazda."

II. HIS LIFE. Nothing can be said positively about his life, nor can the date at which he lived be determined unless discoveries of unexpected material should be made. There are numerous accounts, but they are legendary and

unreliable. By some he is placed two thousand or more years before Christ, as the originator of the faith, the first great prophet. He probably lived between 700 and 1000 B. C. Other accounts would have him a reformer of the religion which in the time of Darius had sunk into wild excesses. F. Marion Crawford in his interesting novel, *Zoroaster*, takes the latter view, makes him a great warrior at the court of Darius and a pupil of the Hebrew prophet Daniel. Disappointed in his love for a Jewish maiden, who becomes through treachery a wife of Darius, Zoroaster flees to the mountains, where for three years he mortifies the flesh and receives the true doctrine of Ahuramazda through magic flames. Returning to Darius he is made high priest, reforms the religion, and in a foray of the hill tribes is killed at the altar with the other priests and the Hebrew woman who had been tricked into marriage with Darius.

The Greek accounts of Zoroaster are as unreliable as any. The Romans represent him as a great teacher with superhuman or divine powers, standing next to God and high above the archangels. All wisdom and truth are his, and all creation is subject to him.

III. A PRAYER TO ZOROASTER. The following prayer in the *Zend-Avesta* is addressed to him:

We worship the rule and the guardian angel of Zarathustra Spitama, who first thought good thoughts, who first spake good words, who first performed good actions, who was the first cultivator of the soil, the first

prophet, the first who was inspired, the first who has given to mankind nature, and reality, and word, and hearing of word, and wealth and all good things created by Mazda, which embellish reality ; who first caused the wheel to turn among gods and men ; who first praised the purity of the living creation and destroyed idolatry ; who confessed the Zarathustrian belief in Ahuramazda, the religion of the living God against the devils. . .

. . . Through his knowledge and speech, the waters and trees became desirous of growing : through his knowledge and speech, all beings created by the Holy Spirit are uttering words of happiness.

IV. HIS POSITION AS A RELIGIOUS REFORMER. Considering everything, he may well have lived about a thousand years before Christ, and was one of the fire-priests who boldly proclaimed and enforced a religious reform. As such he is identical with the fire-priests of the Vedas. We must remember that the Iranians were originally nomadic Aryan tribes, some of whom wandered into India, conquered the country and established themselves as Hindus in the Brahminic faith as we have seen it developed in our discussion of India. Other tribes wandered into Western Persia, settled in the fertile districts, fell into discord and warfare with their brethren, who remained nomads, and after centuries of dissension Zoroaster was born, reformed the old religion, promulgated new dogmas and in the end created a new religion in a manner similar to that in which the Christian religion sprang from the Hebrew, though the schism was not so wide nor so far-reaching. Hinduism and

Zoroastrianism are the religions developed by our Aryan brethren; Christianity is of Semitic origin.

As for Zoroaster, he must have been a great thinker, a man far in advance of his age, if not one of the greatest men the world has known. The Greeks and the Romans, the latter especially, held his doctrines in the highest estimation, and the works of their philosophers abound in praise of the Persian seer.

V. AHURAMAZDA. The leading idea of Zoroaster's religion was monotheism. His predecessors among the fire-priests worshipped a multitude of *ahuras* (lords); he reduced them to one, *Ahuramazda* (Lord, Wisdom, that is, the Wise Lord). This is the *Auramazda* of the cuneiform inscriptions, the *Ahurmazd* of later times and the *Hormazd* or *Ormazd* of the modern Parsees.

This Ahuramazda, the Supreme God, is "the Creator of the earthly and the spiritual life, the Lord of the whole Universe, at whose hands are all the creatures." The following extract from a prayer in the *Zend-Avesta* establishes his rank:

I believe Thee, O God, to be the best thing of all, the source of light for the world. Everybody shall choose Thee as the source of light, Thee, Thee, holiest spirit Mazda! Thou createst all good things by means of the power of Thy good mind at any time, and promisest us, who believe in Thee, a long life.

I believe Thee to be the powerful holy God Mazda, for Thou givest with Thy hand, filled with helps, good to the pious man, as well as to the impious, by means of

the warmth of the fire strengthening the good things. For this reason, the vigor of the good mind has fallen to my lot.

Who was in the beginning the father and creator of truth? Who showed to the sun and the stars their way? Who, if not Thou, causest the moon to increase and wane? Who holds the earth and the skies above it? Who made the waters, and the trees of the field? Who is in the winds and in the storms, that they so quickly run? Who made the light and the darkness? Who made the morning, the noon and the night?

Ahuramazda is light and the source of light, wisdom and intellect. To the man who is pure in thought and word and deed he gives peace, an abundance of all earthly good, and an immortality. He rewards the good, punishes the wicked and governs all things.

VI. DUALISM. Zoroaster attempted to account for the presence of evil in the world by giving a dual nature to everything. Everything that is light, that is true, that is beautiful, came from the one side; darkness, falsehood, ugliness, from the other. The one nature appears in the blazing flame; the other in the black charcoal. One is the light of day; the other, the darkness of night; the former keeps men to their duty, the latter lulls them into neglect. Life is the manifestation of one, death of the other; but death enables the freed soul to gain the immortality which is its due. These dual sides are inseparable in everything, even in Ahuramazda, as well as in men; they are the two original causes of life, growth and existence, of all phenomena. These twin forces are not at war, but work together and are with in and outside of things.

Such was the original thought of Zoroaster, and such his teachings. Even in the time of Darius there was but one God. Perhaps, however, it is not surprising that fine distinctions should be lost and that later writers should extend dualism and make two opposing spirits; the one, *Ormazd*, the Prince of Light, the other, *Ahriman*, the Prince of Darkness; coequal, always at war, both to be placated and worshiped. From this idea developed, naturally enough, the notion of two councils to aid the spirits—six angels of light for the Prince of Light, six fiends, or devils, for *Ahriman*—and then the mythology was well established. None of this, it must be remembered, was contemplated by Zoroaster.

VII. IMMORTALITY. For every soul, according to Zoroaster, there are two lives—the life of the body now; and the life of the soul, yet to come. The latter is continuous, eternal; the former ends with death. For the pious soul there is a heaven, Paradise, the “Best House,” the “House of Hymns,” a place where angels praise God forever in holy song. For the wicked there is hell, the “House of Destruction.” Between the two stretches the bridge *Chinvat*, the “Gatherer of Souls,” the Judge, over which the souls of the pious cross to heaven, but from which the wicked fall into hell.

VIII. SHOSHANS, THE MESSIAH. Zoroaster taught that in the end Shoshans, a spiritually-begotten son, will come. He will awaken the

dead, call together the scattered elements that have formed the bodies of man and restore all to their earthly form to attend the Judgment Day. Then will wickedness disappear forever and death be slain. This doctrine of the resurrection is only one of many in the Christian religion which are closely parallel to those of Zoroastrianism. In fact, so close is the resemblance to be seen in nearly every page of the *Zend-Avesta* that one is led to wonder how much influence this religion which so much antedated Christianity had upon Hebraism and New Testament theology. It has long been a subject of speculation. Notice the summary in the following paragraph.

IX. SUMMARY OF DOCTRINE. From an address that appears in the *Zend-Avesta* and seems to have been delivered by Zoroaster, the following syllabus of the doctrines of his religion has been taken:

1. Everywhere in the world a duality is to be seen.
2. Only this life becomes a prey of death; over that hereafter the destructive spirit has no power.
3. There are from the beginning two forces at work: the one making life, the other destroying it.
4. Both of these forces are accompanied by intellectual powers which work in harmony with them and cause the struggle between good and evil, which ends always in the victory of the good principle.

5. The chief duty of man in this life is to obey the commandments of God.

6. Ahuramazda created the idea of good, the Divine Spirit which produced the good mind and obedient heart in man and nature.

7. The Divine Spirit cannot be resisted.

8. Those who obey the word of God will be immortal and free from all blemish.

9. God rules the world through the Divine Spirit, which is working in man and nature.

10. Man should pray to God and worship him.

11. All men live solely through the generosity of God.

12. The souls of the pure will hereafter enjoy everlasting life; the souls of the wicked be doomed to everlasting torment.

13. All creatures belong to Ahuramazda.

14. He is the reality of the good thought, the good word, the good deed—the three steps along the road which Zoroaster's disciples must tread.

X. RITUALS. The later rituals of the religion are so extended that we can make but brief mention of a few interesting features.

The symbol of Ahuramazda is the sun, with the moon and the planets, or in default of them, fire. During prayers the believer must face a luminous object. The temples are forever fed with a holy fire, brought down according to tradition from heaven. To sully the flame is to be punished by death. Even the priests

wear a bandage over their mouths lest by their breath they defile the flame, and never is it touched except by holy instruments. The Parsees do not smoke, so great is their reverence for fire. It is incorrect to call them fire-worshippers, for to them light is but a symbol of their God.

There are five sacred actions, or sacraments, attending their religion: (1) The slaughtering of animals on solemn occasions; (2) prayer; (3) the Daruns sacrament, which is taken in consecrated bread and wine in honor of the primeval founder of the law, in striking outward resemblance to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; (4) the Expiation, consisting of flagellations or gifts to the priests; and (5) the sacrifice for the souls of the dead.

Purification, both physical and moral, is accomplished by bathing in holy water (*Zirang*) or earth, and by prayers, of which sixteen are to be said every day.

Nothing cooked by a person of another religion is ever eaten; beef and pork, especially ham, are avoided. Marriages are never made outside the caste and creed; polygamy is forbidden except after nine years of sterility; and divorce is unknown. The dead are not buried, but are exposed on an iron grating in a Tower of Silence (*Dokhma*) until dew and rain, the sun and the birds, have removed the flesh and the whitening bones drop through into a pit, from which they are ultimately taken to a subterranean cavern.

XI. DECAY OF THE CULT. This religion of Ahuramazda lasted much as we have outlined it up to the time of Alexander the Great, but under his successors it rapidly lost its influence until the beginning of the reign of the Sasanid dynasty, when under direction of the Magi the ancient books were translated into the more modern tongue and the more primitive religion was revived to flourish for four hundred years, or until the Arabs overran the country. The Magi were pronounced in their opposition to Greek philosophy, and their period of influence was marked by the bitterest persecution of Jews and Christians.

XII. PARSEES. The Parsi, or Guebres (Ghebers, Gabres, Gharores), are the small remnant of the followers of Zoroaster who live chiefly in Yezd and surrounding villages, though some are scattered throughout Persia. After the Mohammedan conquest the great mass of the Persians embraced the faith of Islam, and the small remainder was subjected to such untiring persecutions by the succeeding Caliphs that they were almost exterminated, and to-day there are probably not ten thousand in existence. One branch, the one usually known as Parsees, went to India and now are living for the most part in Bombay. They are an honest, industrious class, law-abiding, and under English rule are prosperous merchants and landholders, noted for their benevolence and generosity, and have won a good deal of respect from the English.

XIII. MODERN FAITH. It is scarcely necessary to say that as is always the case, the purity of their religion has been contaminated by association with their persecutors and that numberless superstitions have been incorporated, until in different localities both beliefs and practices vary widely. Those departures do not concern us at the present time. We want only a clear idea of the religion as it was in its best days, that we may appreciate an influence which indirectly, as we shall see in a closer study of Persian literature, is felt by Europe and America to-day.



A WATER CARRIER



CHAPTER III

THE “ZEND-AVESTA”

WHAT IT IS. The *Zend-Avesta* is the sacred book of the Parsees, the scriptures of the religion of Zoroaster. The word *avesta* means *word*, *text*, *scripture*; and *zend* means *commentary*. Therefore the *Zend-Avesta*, or *Avesta-Zend*, is the holy text and the commentaries thereon. However, the meaning of the word *Zend*, as *commentary*, must not be accepted too literally, for in the course of time the commentaries and text became almost indistinguishable one from another, and *Zend* then was accepted as the proper name for the translation of both into the Pahlavi idiom during the dynasty of the Sassanids.

II. HISTORY OF THE WORK. In *Jeremiah* the chief of the Magi is mentioned as being in the retinue of Nebuchadnezzar; in the New Testament, the Magi come to visit the infant Jesus at Bethlehem: “Behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him.’” Herodotus knew of Zoroaster, and the later Greek writers frequently mention the *Zend-Avesta*. From the accounts of Armenian, Arabian and other writers of different epochs, it is possible to get quite clear accounts of the writings and thereby verify the final conclusions of our scholars concerning the authenticity of modern copies.

The first manuscripts of the *Zend* were taken to Europe in the seventeenth century by travelers who had found them in Western Asia. For a long time they attracted little attention, and it was past the middle of the eighteenth century before a translation appeared in France. This was considered by English scholars as a forgery, and it was a hundred years before there was a general agreement among the Orientalists that a reasonably satisfactory translation of a profoundly interesting document was in their possession.

III. STRUCTURE. Originally the *Zend-Avesta* must have been a vast affair. The historian Pliny speaks of two million verses composed by Zoroaster himself, and an Arabic writer says

that the writings of the great sage covered twelve thousand cowskins. Allowing freely for Oriental exaggeration, we can safely say it must have been immensely longer than the present manuscripts would indicate.

By the Parsees themselves, the destruction of the work is attributed to Alexander the Great, but it is more probable that it was lost during Moslem times. The ceaseless search of the Sassanids was rewarded by the discovery and preservation of the fragments we possess, which included the names or summaries of most of the other parts.

The entire sacred work is thought to have consisted of twenty-one parts, each containing text and commentary. One only now survives in its entirety, the part known as the *Vendidad*. Some fragments of the one, treating of the world and its inhabitants, heaven, water, trees, fire, the resurrection of the dead, etc., and lesser fragments of one or two other parts, have also been preserved.

Other books but imperfectly indicated by the foregoing fragments are held by the Parsees as equally sacred, namely the *Yasna* and the *Vispāred*, the latter of which contains the twenty-four *Yashts*.

IV. THE "YASNA." The classical notion proclaimed the whole bulk of sacred literature as the work of Zoroaster. We know that cannot be true. Only a small portion, it is generally conceded, really was written by Zarathustra (Zerdhust).

The *Yasna* consists now of seventy-two chapters and is the chief liturgical work. It is in two parts, the first written in the Zend idiom, evidently much older than the second. The older *Yasna* consists of five *Gathas* (hymns) and some portions of minor importance. These five *Gathas* are the part that is uniformly attributed to Zoroaster, the reformer.

The meter of the hymns is like that of the hymns in the *Vedas*, and the verses are rhymeless. Crawford gives this translation from one of them:

Best of all good is purity.
Glory, glory to him
Who is best and purest in purity;
For he who ruleth from purity, he abideth according to
the will of the Lord.
The Allwise giveth gifts for the works which man doeth
in the world for the Lord.
He who protecteth the poor giveth the kingdom to Ahura.

These five *Gathas* are small collections of prayers, songs and hymns, most of them dealing with abstractions and philosophical conclusions. The first bears a heading which is meant equally for the other four: "The Revealed Thought, the Revealed Word, the Revealed Deed of Zarathustra, the Holy: the Archangels first sang the *Gathas*." All to a greater or less extent exhort mankind to abandon the smaller gods (the *devas*) and to bow only to Ahura-mazda, and inculcate the principles of the religion as we have described them in the preced-

ing chapter. The following is Dr. Mill's translation of part of one of the *Gathas*:

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: when praise is to be offered, how shall I complete the praise of the One like You, O Mazda? Let the One like Thee declare it earnestly to the friend who is such as I, thus through Thy Righteousness within us to offer friendly help to us, so that the One like Thee may draw near us through Thy Good Mind within the soul.

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: how, in pleasing Him, may we serve the Supreme One of the better world?

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: who by generation was the first father of the Righteous Order? Who gave the recurring sun and stars their undeviating way? Who established that whereby the moon waxes, and whereby she wanes, save Thee? These things, O Great Creator! would I know, and others likewise still.

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: who from beneath hath sustained the earth and the clouds above that they do not fall? Who made the waters and the plants? Who to the wind has yoked on the storm-clouds, the swift and fleetest too? Who, O Great Creator! is the inspirer of the good thoughts within our souls?

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: who, as a skillful artisan, hath made the lights and the darkness? Who, as thus skillful, hath made sleep and the zest of waking hours? Who spread the Auroras, the noontides and midnight, monitors to discerning man, duties, true guides?

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: these things which I shall speak forth, if they are truly thus. Doth the Piety (which we cherish) in reality increase the sacred orderliness within our actions? To these Thy true saints hath she given the Realm through the Good Mind. For whom hast Thou made the Mother-kine, the producer of joy?

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: who fashioned Aramaiti (our piety) the beloved, together with Thy Sovereign Power? Who, through his guiding wisdom, hath made the son revering the father? Who made him beloved? With questions such as these, so abundant, O Mazda! I press Thee, O beautiful Spirit, Thou Maker of all!

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright, that I may ponder these which are Thy revelations, O Mazda! and the words which were asked of Thee by Thy Good Mind within us, and that whereby we may attain, through Thine Order, to this life's perfection. Yea, how may my soul with joyfulness increase in goodness?

• • • • •
This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright that holy faith which is of all Things best, and which going on hand in hand with Thy people, shall further my lands in Asha, Thine Order, and, through the words of Aramaiti (our piety), shall render actions just. The prayers of mine understanding will seek for Thee, O Ahura!

• • • • •
This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: who is the righteous one in that regard in which I ask Thee my question? And who is evil? For which is the wicked? Or which is himself the foremost wicked one? And the vile man who stands against me in this gain of Thy blessing, wherefore is he not held and believed to be the sinner that he is?

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: how shall I banish this Demon-of-the-Lie from us hence to those beneath who are filled with rebellion?

The second part of the older *Yasna* is known as the *Yasna of the Seven Chapters*, containing prayers in prose addressed to Ahuramazda, the angels, fire, the earth, spiritual beings, etc., together with a formula for the admission of converts.

The younger *Yasna* is written in common dialect and treats of a wider array of subjects. For instance, it invites Ahuramazda and all good spirits to be present at the sacrifice, in a manner which has been thus given by Crawford in his *Zoroaster*:

The All-Wise Creator, Ahuramazda, the greatest, the best, and the most fair in glory and majesty,
The mightiest in his strength, the wisest in his wisdom,
the holiest in his holiness, whose power is of all power the fairest,
Who is very wise, who maketh all things to rejoice afar,
Who hath made us and formed us, who has saved us, the holiest among the heavenly ones,
Him I adore and praise, and to him I declare the sacrifice, him I invite,
I declare the sacrifice to the Protector, the Peacemaker,
who maketh the fire to burn, who preserveth the wealth of the earth; the whole earth and the wisdom thereof, the seas and the water, the land and all growing things, I invite to the sacrifice.
Cattle and living things, and the fire of Ahura, the sure helper, the lord of the archangels,
The nights and the days, I call upon, the purity of all created light,
The lord of light, the sun in his glory, glorious in name and worthy of honor,
Who giveth food unto men, and multiplieth the cattle upon the earth, who causeth mankind to increase,
I call upon and invite to the sacrifice,
Water and the center of all waters, given and made of God, that refresheth all things and maketh all things to grow, I call upon and invite.
The souls of the righteous and pure, the whole multitude of living men and women upon earth, I call upon and invite.
I call upon the triumph and the mighty strength of God,
I call upon the archangels who keep the world, upon the

months, upon the pure, new moon, the lordship of purity in heaven,
 I call upon the feasts of the years and the seasons, upon the year and the months and days,
 I call upon the star Ahura,¹ and upon the one great and eternal in purity, and upon all the stars, the works of God,
 Upon the star Tistrya² I call, the far-shining, the magnificent—upon the fair moon that shineth upon the young cattle, upon the glorious sun swift in the race of his flight, the eye of the Lord.
 I call upon the spirit and soul of the righteous, on the fire-begotten of the Lord, and upon all fires. Mountains and all hills, lightened and full of light. Majesty of kingly honor, the Majesty of the king which dieth not, is not diminished,
 All wisdom and blessing and true promises, all men who are full of strength and power and might,
 All places and lands and countries beneath the heavens, and above the heavens, light without beginning, existing, and without end,
 All creatures pure and good, male and female upon the earth.
 All you I invite and call upon to the sacrifice.
 Havani, pure, lord of purity!
 Shavanghi, pure, lord of purity!
 Rapithwina, pure, lord of purity!
 Uzayeirina, pure, lord of purity!
 Aiwishruthrema, Aibigaya, pure, lord of purity!
 Ushahina, pure, lord of purity!
 To Havani, Shavanghi, and Vishya, the pure, the Lord of purity, most glorious, be honor and prayer and fulfillment and praise.
 To the days, and the nights, and the hours, the months and the years and the feast of years, be honor and prayer, and fulfillment and praise before Ahuramazda, the All-Wise, for ever and ever and ever.

¹Jupiter.

Beside this there are pieces referring to the preparation of the fermented *homa* juice of the Hindus), which was made from a species of milkweed and drunk at the altar, and which brought about a wild intoxication if taken freely. Besides, praises of the genius Serosh are sung, and a commentary on the most sacred prayers is given.

V. THE VISPERAD. The *Visperad* is a collection of twenty-three chapters, a kind of supplementary ritual composed of prayers written in Zend and resembling the younger *Yasna*, referring to the same ceremonies, the preparation of the sacred water, consecration of certain offerings, etc.

VI. THE YASHTS. *Yasht* means *worship by prayers and sacrifices*, and as the term is used in the *Zend-Avesta* alludes to certain praise-giving hymns addressed to special angels and minor deities. These songs, probably the work of many poets, are the primary source of the legends which the poet Ferdusi incorporated in his celebrated *Shah-namah*, or *Book of Kings*.

Not strictly a part of the *Yashts* are many similar prayers now in common use by the Parsees, such as the five songs of praise addressed to the sun, the moon, water and fire; the blessings recited over a certain meal prepared for the dead; the five prayers to the angels who guard day and night; and finally, the names of the thirty divine beings who preside over the days following a man's death, and which are usually recited on the thirtieth day.

VII. THE VENDIDAD. This gives an account of the creation, a history of the Zoroastrian religion and the civil and criminal code of the ancient Iranians. It is the *Pentateuch* of the Parsee faith, consisting of twenty-two sections, and is undoubtedly the work of many hands. Three general divisions, or parts, may be seen: the first contains an enumeration of the countries over which the religion of Ahuramazda had spread, some legends and recommendations in agriculture; the second, forming the groundwork of the *Vendidad*, treats of laws, ceremonies and observances; the third is in the nature of an appendix and treats of various subjects, principally of a medical kind, such as spells against diseases. It appears to have survived only in a fragmentary state.



A BEAD SHOP



CHAPTER IV

LITERATURE IN THE ZEND, PAHLAVI AND PARSEE IDIOMS

AKMAN. The more or less mythical personage Lakman occupies in Persian history much the same position that Aesop holds in Greek. One of the modern textbooks in Arabic is a collection of fables attributed to Lakman, who is said by some writers to have been a Persian writer of about the tenth century before Christ. Such claim that he was a slave of Ethiopian origin, conspicuous for his ugliness, and that his fables are the models upon which the Greeks formed theirs.

On the other hand, some Arabic writers make him a nephew of Job or Abraham; others, a councilor of David and Solomon. Mohammed in the Koran says that to him "has been given the Wisdom." When asked the secret of his goodness and wisdom Lakman is said to have

replied, "It is this; I always adhere to the truth, I always keep my word; and I never mix myself up with other people's affairs."

In all probability the fables are the work of many hands in many ages and were finally compiled by some individual whose name became attached to the collection. As we have seen, many of the ancient classics have originated in just this way, the compiler getting the credit for what he had collected.

The Lakman fables are for the most part of Indian origin; they found their way into Arabic by way of Greece and Syria rather than through Persia, in which country, however, they seem to have established themselves most securely and to have been jealously appropriated.

II. BIDPAI. Another collection of fables and stories that has been translated into most of the languages of Europe and Asia and has been current for two thousand years or more, is that which is reputed to be the work of Bidpai, or Pilpai, of whom little or nothing is known.

The original source appears to have been the old Sanskrit collection known as the *Panchatantra*, or "*Five Books*." This was said to have been written for the instruction of the sons of a king in far-away Hindu times. The fables are in prose, and morals in verse are woven into the tales, and these verses are usually quotations from still older works.

From this an abridgment, the *Hitopadesa* (literally, *good advice*), a collection still more

celebrated, was made, and the contents found its way into almost all the civilized languages of the earth, largely by way of the fables of Bidpai.

A Persian king living about A. D. 530 had a translation of the Indian fables made into the Pahlavi dialect, but this was lost in the barbarous ages of Mohammedan control, though not until after it had been translated into Arabic under the Caliph Mansur. From this Arabic translation, in which the author is called Bidpai, the chief of Indian philosophers, have come all the infinite translations and paraphrases known in Europe and Asia.

Modern Persian poets seized upon the fables as subjects for their poems, and a great variety of versions have appeared. The Arabic writers have been no less prolific.

III. FERDUSI. Abul Kasim Mansur has been called the "Homer of Persia." His father was a gardener, and from that fact or because of the exquisitely beautiful "Paradise of Poetry" which he created, he is usually known as Ferdusi, or Firdusi (garden, paradise).

The exact date of his birth is unknown, but he lived during the reign of Shah Mahmud, who reigned from 940 to 1020. Only two facts concerning his boyhood seem well established; he was industrious and he "loved to sit for days alone on the bank of a river." When he was about thirty-five he went to Gazneh, where there lived the Shah Mahmud, who was a great admirer of poetry and a patron of letters.

Fortunately Ferdusi was soon able to exhibit to the Shah his talent for versifying as well as his remarkable acquaintance with the history and legends of Persia. At the request of the Shah the poet wrote a poem which so pleased the monarch that he gave the composer a gold dirhem (then about forty-five grains) for every couplet. Shortly afterward the Shah turned over to him many manuscripts of ancient history and legends and commissioned Ferdusi to write a poetical history of the Persian rulers from the earliest times to the end of the Sassanid dynasty, and on the successful completion of the task he was to be paid a gold dirhem for every line. The result was the celebrated *Shah-namah*, which consisted of sixty thousand double lines and required thirty years to compose.

During the years in which the poet was "weaving his magic carpet of poetry" his enemies were at work with Mahmud, and when the great labor was completed the Shah treated the aged poet with contempt and sneered at the masterful epic. One day while Ferdusi was at his bath he received from the Shah his pay, not the sixty thousand gold dirhems, but sixty thousand small silver pieces of much less value. Enraged at such petty meanness, the old man divided his gift into three portions; one of these he gave to the messenger, a second he presented to an attendant on the bath and the third part to a man who brought him a glass of sherbet.

Ferdusi had written a long poem laudatory of Mahmud which he had intended as an appendix to the *Shah-namah*, but his anger was so great that he burned the verses and wrote instead a bitter satire against the Shah, which he sealed carefully and handed to one of Mahmud's favorite slaves with instructions to keep it until some day when the Shah was in one of his fits of melancholy and then to present it to him, as it was a panegyric which would restore his complacency. Innocently the slave carried out the scheme, but the maddened Shah was unable at once to find the poet, who, foreseeing the effect of his stratagem, had fled.

For eleven years from one place to another the unrelenting Shah pursued the wandering poet, until after a change in advisers Mahmud became convinced that Ferdusi was not so great an offender as he had thought. Loading a caravan with costly merchandise and the original price of the epic, Mahmud started it to Tus, the native city of Ferdusi. With the caravan went a message of compliment and praise for the *Shah-namah*, the poem *Yusuf* and other writings of the poet, and an apology, with an invitation to return to court. But repentance came too late to benefit Ferdusi, for as the Shah's caravan entered one gate of the city the funeral cortege of the poet passed out of another, in 1020. The relatives of Ferdusi declined to accept the gifts for themselves but devoted them to beautifying the city, in memory of its famous son.

IV. THE "SHAH-NAMAH." The meaning of *Shah-namah* is *Book of Kings*. It is one of the great epics of the world and ranks favorably in many respects with corresponding tales of Greece, India and Germany. Professedly it is a history, and however unreliable as such, it undoubtedly contains much valuable material. But facts were wanting in the first place, or if at hand, were not romantic enough to please the fertile fancy of a great poet. So he combined fiction with his fact, fairy lore with his history, and painted his personages with all the gorgeous colors of an Oriental imagination. Yet his characters are human, and their joys and sorrows, their triumphs and failures, bravery and cowardice are all presented so vividly that interest in the song can never fade. It is a quaint and curious thing—a real Eastern epic that glows with colors almost unknown in our Western verses.

Even the evident absurdities and anachronisms do not disturb the reader. What if Alexander the Great is called a Christian and Abraham and Zerdusht are said to be the same person, and a thousand other inaccuracies crowd the pages? There are at times things far more important than historic accuracy. The very popularity of the *Shah-namah*, however, has been against it, and innumerable copies of it have been so changed by those who have transcribed it that it may be said that scarcely any two are alike. In no copy are the sixty thousand distiches to be found, the longest

containing less than fifty-seven thousand. It is written in the purest of Parsee idiom, with very few Arabic words, and thus affords a classic medium for the beautiful episodes which are described in a style of great clearness and exquisite grace.

V. THE TRANSITION TO MODERN PERSIAN. It may be said that the Parsee, or, as the Arabs call it, Farsi, idiom is itself the transition from ancient to modern Persian. The Mohammedan conquest blighted the Persian language for a time and left as a permanent effect a vast number of Arabic words, but the Parsee tongue was too strong to be killed entirely, and it finally developed into the richest and most elegant language spoken in Asia to-day. Naturally there are many dialects, but the one we have reference to is that spoken in Shiraz, Ispahan and the surrounding districts. What the French language was for centuries to Europe, the language of beauty, culture and refinement, Persian is now through Moslem and Hindu countries.

Nor is its position a matter for wonder, because it has an exceedingly large and rich vocabulary, great flexibility of idiom, permitting accuracy of statement and delicacy in distinction, while in speech it is sonorous and musical. The grammar of the new language is much simpler than those of the Zend and Parsee, but still expresses through the agency of auxiliary words all that a complex system of inflection could indicate.

A little before the time of Ferdusi there was a great awakening among the Persians, a reaction against the paralyzing influence of Arab control, and the silence was broken by a chorus of singers, who published their songs in great profusion for nearly five centuries, or until the national spirit had again been quelled by the savage wars of contending conquerors. During this period of renaissance the output of verse was tremendous and the number of writers incredible. We can glance at but a few of the leaders.

VI. PERSIAN POETRY. The modern tongue is perfectly adapted to poetry, and the creations of the poets show high art and a complete mastery of the elements of attractiveness. New measures were created and refined to the utmost and given names as poetical as the measures. One, from its soft murmuring tones, they call *suja*, the *cooing of doves*. In their *gazelle*, or ode, they treat of friendship, beauty of love, and in the last stanza the poet is permitted to mention his own name. The ode when of greater length is called the *idyl*. These two are the favorite forms in which the Persian lyricist writes. But there are epics and didactic poems, elegies and, in fact, nearly all the kinds of poetry our own writers affect.

The Persian poet does not hesitate to sacrifice perspicuity to rhyme and meter. Much of the obscurity and so-called mysticism results from this habit, for even the ingenious commentators on the master poets cannot decipher

the thought, and content themselves with abstruse speculations. Poetic license with the Persians is license indeed. There is no natural order of words in arrangement in sentences, no rule of tense that may not be violated if rhyme is bettered thereby. As an inevitable result in translations, we can never be certain that we have the exact meaning.

But in Persia poetry is not altogether a matter of sentiment; rather is it the universal literature, for it is used in every department of knowledge, just as the Hindus use it. Natural history, medicine and all the natural sciences, mathematics, astronomy, even grammar, are thought to be expressed to better advantage in metrical language than in the cold prose to which we are accustomed.

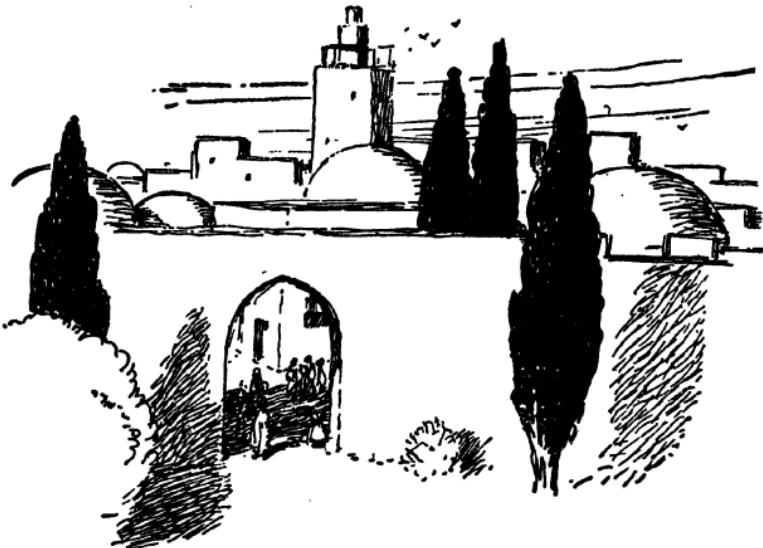
The rewards given to poets for productions that have pleased the wealthy sound fabulous in our Western ears, and the exquisite decoration of Persian manuscripts has long been the wonder and admiration of our bookmakers. Wide, illuminated margins; choice paper sprinkled with gold and silver dust; perfect writing and costly inks are not enough, for many are expensively perfumed.

Three particular tales have been told again and again by Persian poets, until it seems to have become a fixed belief that no poet is really successful until he has told in an acceptable manner the beloved *History of Khosru and Shireen*, the *Loves of Yusuf and Zulikha* or the *Misfortunes of Meijnoun and Laila*. The

first is a Persian romance of happy love, in which Shireen is as charming in character as she is in person; the second is an Arabian tale, whose unfortunate hero loves to madness; the third, the sacred story of Yusuf (Joseph), the perfection of whose holy character conquers the overwhelming and improper passion of Zulikha (Potiphar's wife).



A PERSIAN MAIDEN



CHAPTER V

LATER PERSIAN POETS

ESSIDI. Prior to the time of Ferdusi, even, there were poets whose genius anticipated much that was to follow. Among them was Rudegi, who is said to have written over a million of double verses, of which, however, few remain. At one time his wealth and popularity were so great that he kept two hundred slaves to wait upon him.

Contemporary with Ferdusi there were some four hundred poets attached to the court of the Shah Mahmud, whose chief occupation was to write verses in praise of their renowned patron.

Among them was Essidi of Tus, the countryman and teacher of the great Ferdusi, whose

Dispute between Day and Night is the most celebrated of his poems.

II. NIZAMI. About A. D. 1200 lived the poet Nizami, who is called the father of the romantic epic. His greatest work is the *Chamshe*, or *Five Treasures*, a collection of beautiful narrative poems, of which the *Meijnoun and Laila* is said to be the most beautiful rendering of that tale. Another story in the collection is his *Khosru and Shireen*. These poems are almost as well known in Europe as they are in Persia, though the appreciation of them in the latter place is shown by the fact that the Shah was so pleased with the work of the poet that he gave him no fewer than fourteen states. His grave at Gendshes is still visited by the curious and devout.

III. SUFISM. The Sufists are a Moslem sect of mystics, whose philosophy is a mixture of the principles of many religions, though they all claim to be followers of Islam and to have the only true version of it. They assume four degrees of human sanctity, each more mystic and exclusive than its predecessor. The first degree requires strict conformity to all the ethical laws and ritual observances of Islam, and is the only one which the great mass of the people is supposed to be able to attain. Before any one can have taken the second degree he must have risen beyond the first to the mental power and virtue necessary for a nearer approach to divinity, and a spirit of devotion and reliance upon God. These, the *Murides*, do not

obey the law because it is the law, but because the things required to be done are right; they give alms not because it is required, but because they pity the needy; they perform ablutions not because they are of the ritual, but because cleanliness and purity are virtues.

Only those who have a true perception of the visible and the invisible, who know God and have entered into ecstatic relation with him, can enter the third degree. In them is the faith still further spiritualized.

The fourth and last is that of the *Murshid*, a degree of perfection attainable by few. They are in direct communion with God, and their words are God's words. A Murshid is the "Sun of Faith," while the Sufi of the third degree is the "Moon of Faith."

This sect has contained many men of an extremely high order of intellect, and among their number are to be placed many of Persia's greatest historians, poets and philosophers.

Sufi poetry is full of allegory and symbolism. In its praise of wine, for instance, the poets rise to an ecstasy in which they imagine they communicate direct with deity; it is a spiritual intoxication, not a vinous one, to which they allude. Love of women is symbolic of religion and union with God, for human beings know no passion stronger than that of sex. It is difficult for our cooler Western minds to see more than a praise of wine and women: our interpretation must of necessity be more literal than they would have it.

IV. ATTAR. Ferid Eddin Attar was born in 1216. *Pend-namah*, or *Book of Counsel*, contains the biographies of saints up to his day. But his mystic poems gave him his greatest renown, and hosts of commentators and students have devoted their time to determining the hidden meaning and the profound depths of his symbolism. He lived to be nearly a hundred years old, and finally suffered martyrdom.

V. RUMI AND THE DERVISHES. *Dervish* means *poor*, as does the Hindu word *fakir*, and the sects bearing these names are similar. In some respects the Moslem dervishes resemble the monks of the Middle Ages. In general, they live in well endowed monasteries under a head known as the *Sheik*, that is, the *Elder*, though some are married and live outside, but in that case they must sleep in the monastery at stated intervals. They are divided into brotherhoods, and each has its own ritual of fasting, penance and mortification. Just when the dervishes originated or how their curious customs arose it is not possible to tell.

Djalal Eddin Rumi, who died in 1266 and is usually called the Mullah, was an enthusiastic follower of Sufism, and through his poem, the *Contemplative Life*, he has become the great oracle of the sect. He founded the order of *Manlawiyah*, commonly known as the "dancing dervishes" or "whirling dervishes," still one of the most popular of the brotherhoods in Persia.

It is said that in his house was a pillar, and when he was in one of his ecstatic moods he grasped the pillar and whirled about it, not infrequently dictating his poetry while engaged in this dizzy occupation. It was at such a time that he wrote:

Come! Come! Thou art the Soul, the Soul so dear,
revolving!

Come! Come! Thou art the Cedar, the Cedar's Spear,
revolving!

Oh, come! The well of Light up-bubbling springs;
And Morning Stars exult, in Gladness sheer, revolving!

His love for little children is proverbial, and many of the beautiful passages in his work concern them. He must have been a prodigy himself, if at six he saw visions, taught his playmates philosophy and flew through the celestial regions!

The following is a good example of the poetry of the double meaning of the earthly love which is the symbol of the divine:

I was on that day when the Names were not,
Nor any sign of existence endowed with name,
By me Names and Named were brought to view
On the day when there was not "I" and "We,"
For a sign, the tip of the Beloved's curl became a cen-
ter of revelation;

As yet the tip of that curl was not.

Cross and Christians, from end to end,
I surveyed; He was not on the Cross.

I went to the idol-temple, to the ancient pagoda;
No trace was visible there.

I went to the mountains of Herat and Candchar;
I looked; He was not in that hill-and-dale.

I gazed into my own heart;
There I saw Him ; He was nowhere else.

The following contains a sentiment of resignation :

Our Sweetnesses all blent in Thee,
 Give infant lips their smiles benign.
Thou crushest me to drops of Rose
 Nor 'neath the press do I repine.
In Thy sweet Pain is pain forgot ;
 For I, Thy Rose, had this design.
Thou bad'st me blossom on Thy Robe,
 And mad'st me for all eyes Thy sign.
And when Thou pour'st me on the world,
 It blows in beauty, all Divine.

The refrain in the following assists in making the poem beautiful :

The souls love-moved are circling on,
 Like streams to their great Ocean King.
With two forms and with two figures but with one soul,
 thou and I.
The colors of the grove and the voice of the birds will
 bestow immortality
At the time when we come into the garden, thou and I.
The stars of heaven will come to gaze upon us ;
We shall show them the moon itself, thou and I.
Thou and I, individuals no more, shall be mingled in
 ecstasy,
Joyful, and secure from foolish babble, thou and I.
All the bright-plumed birds of heaven will devour their
 hearts with envy
In the place where we shall laugh in such a fashion,
 thou and I.
This is the greatest wonder, that thou and I, sitting
 here in the same nook,
Are at this moment both in Iraq and Khorasan, thou
 and I.

A quaint conceit:

Parrots are taught to speak without understanding the words. The method is to place a mirror between the parrot and the trainer. The trainer, hidden by the mirror, utters the words, and the parrot, seeing his own reflection in the mirror, fancies another parrot is speaking, and imitates all that is said by the trainer behind the mirror. So God uses prophets and saints as mirrors whereby to instruct men, viz., the bodies of these saints and prophets; and men, when they hear the words proceeding from these mirrors, are utterly ignorant that they are really being spoken by "Universal Reason" or the "Word of God" behind the mirror of the saints.

On the death of little children:

A woman bore many children in succession, but none of them lived beyond the age of three or four months. In great distress she cried to God, and then beheld in a vision the beautiful gardens of Paradise, and many fair mansions therein, and upon one of these mansions she read her own name inscribed. And a voice from heaven informed her that God would accept the sorrows she had endured in lieu of her blood shed in holy war, as, owing to her sex, she was unable to go out to battle like the men. On looking again, the woman beheld in Paradise all the children she had lost, and she cried, "O Lord! they were lost to me, but safe with Thee!"

What higher ideal can there be for God's temple than the following:

Fools laud and magnify the mosque,
While they strive to oppress holy men of heart.
But the former is mere form, the latter spirit and truth.
The only true mosque is that in the hearts of saints.
The mosque that is built in the hearts of the saints
Is the place of worship of all, for God dwells there.
So long as the hearts of the saints are not afflicted,
God never destroys the nation.



CHAPTER VI

LATER PERSIAN POETS (CONTINUED)

OMAR KHAYYAM. One of the most celebrated of the Persian poets, and certainly the one who up to the present time is best known through the world, is Omar Khayyam, who lived at the close of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century. The date of his birth is unknown, and we are not certain that 1132, the date usually given for his death, is accurate. Of his life very little is known, but his writings show him to have held very liberal religious opinions and to have been vigorous in his attacks upon hypocrisy and intolerance. Moreover, he was bitterly satirical in his treatment of the mystic poets, though readers now pretend to see in his work the symbolism which is claimed for the others.

His *Rubaiyat* is almost universally recognized as one of the world's great classics, and

through the medium of Edward Fitzgerald's remarkable English translation it is one of the books well known to all cultured readers of the present century. This translation is far from literal; in fact, it is a paraphrase and one that sometimes fails to convey the meaning of the Persian poet, but it has the true Oriental spirit and comes nearer than anything else to giving us a real conception of the beauties of Persian poetry.

The *rubaiyat* are epigrams, each in a four-line stanza in which the rhyme is missing at the end of the third, with the result of giving each stanza a flowing wave-like motion that is beautifully monotonous. Each *rubai* is complete in itself, but a connecting thought often runs through many. For example, in one place the potter and his clay appear in a succession of stanzas and in the form of a beautiful allegory give his views of life. It is difficult to conceive the *Rubaiyat* as symbolic. It is a plain adulation of wine, the fermented juice of the grape, but not wine as an agent of intoxication and bestial excess. It is merely of wine which causes that beatific state of exaltation in which the poet's mind sees most clearly. It is the inspiration to that mood of contemplation and quiet brooding upon the affairs of the world which characterizes the whole poem. In the same manner another poet might glorify any other cause or instigator of such a mood.

A measure of unity is secured in the slightly concealed parallelism with a day, which runs

through the poem. It opens with the Persian New Year's morning, a morning in the beginning of spring, and it closes at night with the moonlight.

The first four stanzas are joined by this idea of the morning and the opening Tavern, and the fifth introduces the wine. The *Tavern* of the Persian is *Paradise*, with a rose garden by the water and overhanging boughs.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:

The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

Whether at Naishapur or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

He invites his love to go with him “along the strip of herbage strewn that just divides the desert from the sown,” and then:

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

A series of stanzas are connected by a melancholy view of the evanescence of wealth and power, but in two beautiful stanzas compensation is shown:

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
Abode his destin'd Hour, and went his way.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:

And Bahram that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;

That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-lip on which we lean—

Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

Ah, my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regret and future Fears:

To-morrow! Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

How easily and with what grace a common
thought is put into the language of the vine:
“Some we loved, the loveliest and the best,
have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
and one by one crept silently to rest.”

The first of the next two reminds us of pas-
sages in *Thanatopsis*, and the second suggests
the “seventh age of man:”

And we that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,

Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend—ourselves to make a couch—for whom?

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;

Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

Fruitless efforts to unravel the knot of hu-
man fate is the theme of the next few stanzas
with their suggestiveness:

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
 About it and about: but evermore
 Came out by the same door where in I went.
 With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
 And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
 And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
 "I came like Water, and like Wind I go."
 Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing
 Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing
 And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
 I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.
 What, without asking hither hurried *Whence*?
 And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
 Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
 Must drown the memory of that insolence!
 Up from the Earth's Center through the Seventh Gate
 I rose and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
 And many a Knot unravel'd by the Road;
 But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.
 There was the Door to which I found no Key;
 There was the Veil through which I might not see;
 Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
 There was—and then no more of THEE and ME.
 Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn
 In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
 Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs reveal'd
 And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.
 Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
 The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
 A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
 As from Without—"THE ME WITHIN THEE
 BLIND!"
 Then to the Lip of this poor earthern Urn
 I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn:
 And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—"While you live,
 Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall return."

By means of the next stanza the poet cleverly paves the way for the introduction of the Potter with his Clay—a somewhat trite figure with us now, but nevertheless beautifully wrought out:

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,
And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kiss'd,
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all-obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

Not until after a long series of stanzas is the Potter again mentioned, but there is an under-current suggesting the figure through the stanzas until once more it is taken up and exquisitely elaborated. Returning to the *Rubaiyat*, we find three beautiful stanzas connected by an imaginative thread which the Clay suggested:

And has not such a Story from of Old
Down Man's successive generations roll'd
Of such a cloud of saturated Earth
Cast by the Maker into Human mold?

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
For Earth to drink of, but may steal below
To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
There hidden—far beneath, and long ago.

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up,
Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
To Earth invert you—like an empty Cup.

Then the poet advises his reader to perplex himself no more with the questions, to resign to-morrow's tangle to the winds and "lose your fingers in the tresses of the Cypress, slender Minister of Wine."

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and Ends in—Yes;

Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTERDAY
You were—TO-MORROW you shall not be less.

So when the Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff—you shall not shrink.

Life, the poet says, is "But a Tent where takes his one day's rest, A Sultan to the realm of Death addrest:" and after him the Tent is prepared for another Guest. The next stanza is not complete, but runs into the following one, one of the few instances of the sort in the poem. "The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has pour'd millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour when you and I behind the veil are past."

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reach'd
The NOTHING it set out from—Oh, make haste!

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue—
Could you but find it—to the Treasure-house,
And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

Whose secret Presence through Creation's veins
Running quicksilver-like eludes your pains;
Taking all shapes from Mah to Mahi; and
They change and perish all—but he remains;

If our moment of existence be so brief, if we know not *whence* nor *whither*, then fly to the Grape:

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavor and dispute;

Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Then sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?

A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

What then is certain? The poet replies:

Oh, threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain—*This Life flies*,
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

Of the future after death we know nothing:

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

What are we? What is Heaven and what is Hell?

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell;
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd, "I Myself am Heav'n and Hell:"

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire
 Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerg'd from, shall so soon expire.

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
 Round with the Sun—illumin'd Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show:

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days.
 Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes,
 And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—He knows—HE knows!

In that last group of stanzas appears in the poet's brooding consciousness the idea of God and judgment, but the inference is inevitable that here and now in this brief span comes the punishment and the reward for us, the "moving row of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go." There must be a moral consciousness, a sense of sin, but what becomes of this if all is predestined from the very beginning of things? If man has had no part in bringing himself into the world and can change nothing here, how can he have any moral responsibility for what is? Then follow two of the finest stanzas, but both filled with the cold, unsatisfying doctrine of helplessness and predestination, "the first Morning of Creation wrote what the last Dawn of Reckoning shall read."

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit

Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,

Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for it
As impotently moves as you or I.

The remedy, the compensation? “Drink: for you know not whence you came, nor why: Drink, for you know not why you go, nor where.” Let the dervish flout the remedy. Perchance from “my base metal may be filed a Key that shall unlock the Door he howls without.” Whether he be kindled to Love or quite consumed by the Wrath of the One True Light, it is better to catch one true flash of *It* in the Tavern than to lose it outright in the Temple. That God should create a man powerless to change conditions and yet hold him responsible under Everlasting Penalties is absurd. Then follows the perfect stanza which, however, is said to be a misreading of the original:

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd—Man's forgiveness give—and take!

There is now a suggestion of the closing of day, and with that the poet recurs to his image of the Potter and the Clay, so long held in abeyance: “Once more within the Potter's house alone I stood, surrounded by the shapes of Clay.”

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;

And some loquacious vessels were; and some
Listen'd perhaps, but never talk'd at all.

Said one among them—"Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en

And to this Figure molded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

Then said a Second—"Ne'er a peevish Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy;

And He that with his hand the Vessel made
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

After a silence the third vessel, one of ungainly make, feeling the sneers that are cast at him because of his awryness, wonders of the Almighty creating him. "Did the Hand then of the Potter shake?" A fourth vessel, a loquacious one, the poet thinks a Sufi pipkin, waxing hot, reaches the profound depths of all controversy by his question, "Tell me then, who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?" Another Pot has heard some one say that "He will toss to Hell the luckless Pots he's marred in making"—"Pish!" he answers for himself, "The Potter's a Good Fellow and 'twill all be well." Finally:

"Well," murmur'd one, "Let whoso make or buy,
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry:
But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by and by."

"While the Vessels one by one were speaking, the little Moon looked in that all were seeking." The sense of approaching night

deepens, and with it come thoughts of the “last bitter hour,” not repentant thoughts, for he would with the Grape his fading life provide, and wishes that friends “wash the Body whence the Life has died and lay me shrouded in the living Leaf” by some frequented Garden-side whence his buried ashes shall spring up such a snare of vintage that every True-believer passing by shall be taken unaware.

With the evening, too, he becomes reminiscent, and hesitates at the effect of his Idol-worship which drowned his shallow reputation in a Cup; he remembers that he repented oft-times, whether drunk or sober at the time, he cannot tell, but Spring and Rose-in-Hand came and tore his threadbare Penitence. Yet withal he is not seriously disturbed:

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honor—Well,
I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

Regrets will not all down, however, as this exquisite couplet proclaims:

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!

And again:

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse—if dimly, yet indeed, reveal'd,
To which the fainting Traveler might spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

A little impatience, a trifling spirit of irritation:

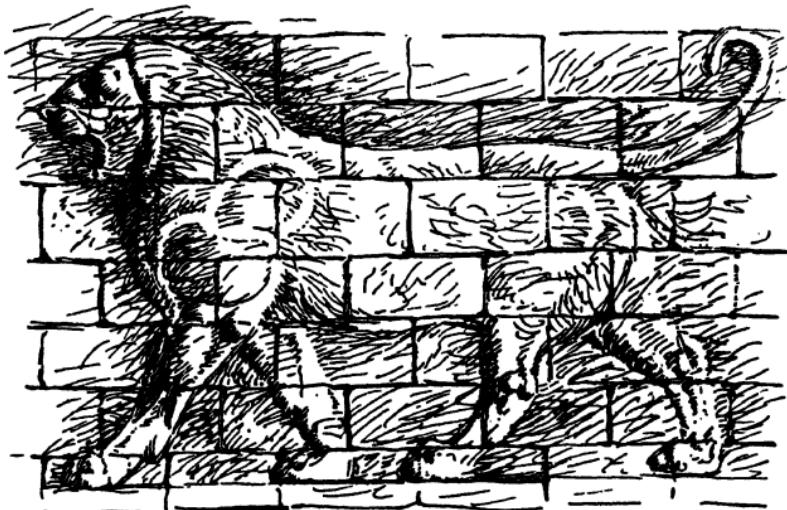
Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,

Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's desire!

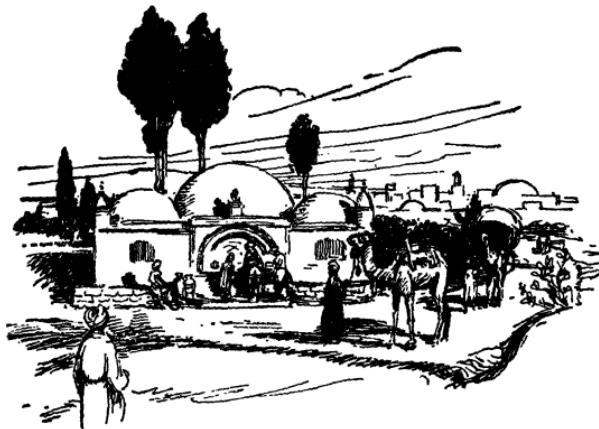
The rising moon now signals the end of day,
and the poet knows that as night buries the
day so will his hours of strong consciousness
pass into oblivion, though the moon will wax
and wane and arising look for us through this
same Garden, but—for *one*, the poet himself,
in vain!

And when like her, oh Saki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,

And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!



FROM THE WALLS OF THE PALACE OF ARTAXERXES



CHAPTER VII

LATER PERSIAN POETS (CONCLUDED)

SADI. Musleh Addin Sadi was born at Shiraz, about 1184. Few facts concerning his early life are known, but he traced his ancestry to Ali, son-in-law of Mohammed, and was left fatherless at an early age. He was educated at Bagdad and became a great traveler, visiting most of the countries of Western Asia and Northern Africa and parts of Europe, beside making no fewer than fourteen pilgrimages to Mecca, chiefly on foot. Of his journeys he says: "I have wandered to various regions of the world, and everywhere have I mixed freely with the inhabitants. I have gathered something in each corner. I have gained an ear from every harvest."

At one time while practicing his austerities in the desert near Jerusalem he was captured by the Crusaders, but was ransomed for ten

dinars by a merchant of Aleppo, who also presented the poet with a hundred dinars. A marriage with the merchant's daughter proved unhappy; the lady had a sharp tongue. But once when she taunted him with the ransom, the gentle Sadi lost his poise and retorted: "Yes, I am he whom your father redeemed with ten dinars, but enslaved me to thee for a hundred."

By a second marriage he had an only son, who died early, and the bereaved father retired to a place near his native town, where he spent the remainder of his life, dying at an advanced age, probably about the year 1282.

In person he was short and spare, and his ascetic habits did not tend to increase the attractiveness of his person. Nevertheless, his genius made him extremely popular while he lived, and honors were showered upon him by princes and nobles. After his death a costly mausoleum was erected to his memory at the gates of Shiraz, and the magnificent structure in time was believed to have the mystic power of a religious shrine and was the object of countless pilgrimages.

His character, as indicated by a remark he once made, which, considering the austere life he led, is worthy of note: "I never complained of my condition but once, when my feet were bare and I had no money to buy shoes; but I met a man without feet and I became contented with my lot."

His extraordinary popularity continued after his death, and his admirers have attached

to his name a great number of eloquent descriptive phrases. He is the "nightingale of the groves of Shiraz," "the most eloquent of writers," "the nightingale of a thousand songs," "the wittiest author of ancient or modern times," "one of the four monarchs of eloquence and style."

He was a prolific writer of verse in many of its forms, but his most noted works are two in number. *Gulistan* (*The Rose Garden*) is a kind of moral work in both prose and verse on a variety of topics such as Love, Youth, Contentment, the Duties of Society, etc. There are stories, anecdotes, maxims, puns and sparkling comments, all expressed in beautiful language.

One of the translators of *Gulistan* has remarked:

The school-boy lisps out his first lessons in it, the man of learning quotes it, and a vast number of the expressions have become proverbial. When we consider, indeed, the time in which it was written—the first half of the thirteenth century—a time when gross darkness brooded over Europe, at least—darkness which might have been, but, alas! was not felt—the justness of many of its sentiments, and the glorious view of the Divine attributes contained in it, are truly remarkable.

The following extracts are from *Gulistan* and will give some idea of the range of subjects treated in it.

These verses are from the prologue:

Green was the gay apparel of the woods,
Like festal robes on happy multitudes.

A garden whose waters were shackles of light:
A thicket whose minstrels enchanted the night.

One with its bright-robed tulips all aflame,
One dark with fruits of many a curious name;
The wind, amid the shadow of its bowers,
Had diapered the jeweled turf with flowers.

This anecdote is from the chapter on the
Manners of Kings:

One of the kings of Khorassan in a dream beheld the vision of Sultan Mahmud, an hundred years after he had died. His whole body seemed to have crumbled and turned to dust, save only his eyes, which were moving in their sockets and looking about them. All the learned ones failed to interpret this, except a Dervish, who made obeisance and said: "He is still looking to see how it came to pass that his kingdom belongs to others."

On friendship:

He is no friend who in thine hour of pride
Brags of his love and calls himself thy kin.
He is a friend who hales his fellow in,
And clangs the door upon the wolf outside.

A witty rejoinder:

The king said: "Verily we are in need of one sufficiently intelligent who is able to carry on the affairs of the government." He answered: "It is a sign of sufficient intelligence not to meddle with such matters."

Slander:

All these are nothing as they fleet away,
Throne and dominion, squalor and display.
If thou wouldest have no shadow on thy fame,
Soil not the temple of another's name.

False pretensions:

Thou who within of good resolve art bare,
 Yet dost the mantle of the righteous wear;
 Thou who hast but a reed-mat to thy floor,
 Hang not the rainbow-curtain on the door.

Frugality:

It is written in the annals of Ardeshir Babekan that he asked an Arabian physician how much food ought to be taken daily. He answered: "The weight of one hundred dirhems were enough." The king asked him: "What strength will this quantity give me?" He replied: "This quantity will carry thee; but whatever more is taken, thou wilt be the carrier of it."

Eat to live, thy prayers repeating;
 Think not life was made for eating.

Pearls do not satisfy hunger:

I saw an Arab sitting amid a circle of jewelers at Bosrah, and telling them tales. He said: "Once I lost my way in the desert, and had consumed all my provisions. I was prepared to die, when suddenly I beheld a bag of pearls. Never shall I forget the joy I felt, deeming them to be parched grain, nor the bitterness and despair with which I found them to be pearls."

The wise talker does not repeat:

A word, if binding on the heart and sweet,
 Is worthy of belief and approbation.
 What thou hast said ne'er let thy tongue repeat:
 We do not twice partake the same collation.

On interrupting a speaker:

I once heard a philosopher say that no one has ever confessed his own ignorance, save him who begins to talk whilst another has not yet finished.

A stinging rebuke:

A fellow with a rasping voice happened to be reading the Koran, when a holy man passing by asked him what he received a month for so doing. He answered: "Nothing." Then added the holy one: "Why takest thou this trouble?" He replied: "I am reading for God's sake." Answered the holy man: "Then for God's sake do not read."

Haste makes waste:

O thou who' wouldst attain the goal,
A graybeard bids thee curb thy soul.
Yon Arab but a course can stay:
The camel saunters night and day.

The value of a trade:

A Philosopher was teaching boys, and said to them: "O darlings of your fathers, learn a trade, since no reliance may be placed upon the possessions and riches of the world: for silver and gold are a source of peril, since either a thief may steal them at once or the owner waste them by degrees; but a profession is a living spring and wealth enduring. Although a professional man may lose his fortune, he need not grieve, for his knowledge is wealth of itself, and wherever he go he will be honored, and sit in the upper seat: but he who has no calling will glean the crumbs and suffer want."

Allah's care:

Allah did not forget thee in that term
When thou wast but the buried, senseless germ:
He gave thee soul, perception, intellect,
Beauty and speech and reason circumspect:
By Him five fingers to thy fist were strung,
And thy two arms upon thy shoulders hung.
O graceless one! what cause hast thou to dread
Lest He remember not thy daily bread?

Friend and enemy:

Reveal not every secret thou hast to a friend, for how knowest thou that he may not hereafter become thine enemy? Do not unto thine enemy all the evil that is in thy power, since one day he may become thy friend.

Conclusion:

The *Book of the Gulistan* has been finished, and the aid of Allah besought. By the favor of the Almighty—may His name be hallowed!—throughout the work the custom of writers to insert verses borrowed from the ancient poets has not been followed.

To deck oneself in tatters of one's own
Is better than a broidered robe to loan.

Bustan is a similar work, but written entirely in verse and therefore more difficult to translate, though some of the anecdotes and moral precepts are exceedingly interesting and filled with beauty. We quote a few.

The Persian's love for a fine horse is second only to the Arab's. Remembering that fact increases the force of the following:

Hatim Tai possessed a horse whose fleetness was as that of the morning breeze. Of this was the Sultan of Turkey informed.

"Like Hatim Tai," he was told, "none is equal in generosity; like his horse, nothing is equal in speed and gait. As a ship in the sea it traverses the desert, while the eagle, exhausted, lags behind."

"From Hatim will I request that horse," the King replied. "If he be generous and give it to me, then shall I know that his fame is true; if not, that it is but the sound of a hollow drum."

So he despatched a messenger with ten followers to Hatim. They alighted at the house of the Arab chief, who prepared a feast and killed a horse in their honor.

On the following day, when the messenger explained the object of his mission, Hatim became as one mad with grief. "Why," he cried, "didst thou not give me before thy message? That swift-paced horse did I roast last night for thee to eat. No other means had I to entertain thee; that horse alone stood by my tent, and I would not that my guests should sleep fasting."

To the men he gave money and splendid robes, and when the news of his generosity reached to Turkey, the King showered a thousand praises upon his name.

The idea of the following scarcely would have originated in the West:

Some one said to a moth: "Go, thou contemptible creature, and make friendship with one worthy of thyself; go where thou seest the path of hope. How different is thy love from that of the candle! Thou art not a salamander—hover not around the fire, for bravery is necessary before combat. It is not compatible with reason that thou shouldst acknowledge as a friend one whom thou knowest to be thine enemy."

"What does it matter if I burn?" the moth replied. "I have love in my heart, and this flame is as a flower to me. Not of my own accord do I throw myself into the fire; the chain of her love is upon my neck. Who is it that finds fault with my friendship for my friend? I am content to be slain at her feet. I burn because she is dear to me, and because my destruction may affect her. Say not to the helpless man from whose hands the reins have fallen, 'Drive slowly.' "

There is food for thought in this cynical little tale:

In company with some religious mendicants I entered a date-grove in Busra. One of the party was a glutton. He, having girt his loins, climbed up a tree, and, falling headlong, died.

The headsman of the village asked, "Who killed this man?"

"Go softly, friend," I answered; "he fell from a branch—'twas the weight of his stomach."

The professor's rebuke was not unmerited:

A fellow-student at Nezamiah displayed malevolence towards me, and I informed my tutor, saying: "Whenever I give more proper answers than he the envious fellow becomes offended."

The professor replied: "The envy of thy friend is not agreeable to thee, but I know not who told thee that back-biting was commendable. If he seek perdition through the path of envy, thou wilt join him by the path of slander."

Sadi's keen wit is illustrated in the following:

One night a villager could not sleep, owing to a pain in his side. A doctor said: "This pain is caused by his having eaten the leaves of the vine. I shall be astonished if he lasts through the night, for the arrows of a Tartar in his breast were better for him than the eating of such indigestible food."

That night the doctor died; forty years have since passed, and the villager yet lives.

II. HAFIZ. Mohammed Hafiz was born near the beginning of the fourteenth century and died probably in 1388. He was an earnest and faithful student and early attracted the attention of the ruling powers, who patronized him, appointed him teacher, founded a college for him and in various ways recognized his genius. But as he was independent by nature and thought poverty the proper school for the soul, he offended his patrons by his brusqueness and declined to visit them or accept their bounty. In spite of his abstemiousness, or because of it,

he lived the long life which seems characteristic of Persian poets and died as he had lived, a persistent hater of display, selfishness and hypocrisy. He had offended most of the religious authorities and at his death they refused to say the customary prayers over his body. After a fierce altercation with the relatives of the deceased, lots were cast to determine the question, as is the custom in the East. The relatives won, and Hafiz was given a sumptuous funeral. The elegant tomb near Shiraz is an object of reverence, and pilgrims still visit it.

Hafiz was undoubtedly one of the great men of the world, great as a philosopher and great as a poet. Fitzgerald says: "Hafiz is the most Persian of the Persians. He is the best representation of their character, whether his *sake* and wine be real or mystical. The religion and philosophy of the other poets is easily seen through, and always seems to me cuckooed over like a borrowed thing which, people once having got, do not know how to parade enough. To be sure, their roses and nightingales are repeated often enough. But Hafiz and Old Omar Khayyam ring like true metal." Damlat Shah says, "Hafiz, the king of the learned ones and the cream of the wise ones, was the wonder of the time." In the seventeenth century Sudi wrote that "the verses of Hafiz derived their innate grace from having been bathed in the water of life, and in beauty they equaled the dark-eyed Houris of Paradise. He scorns to use any art but art to conceal art."

There are many altogether human touches, real sentiments, that come down the years, retaining an intensity that we can still feel. After his son died he wrote: "My beloved is gone, and I had not even bidden him farewell," and "He himself went an easy way, but made mine hard." His devotion to his dead wife was touching: "Then said my heart, 'I will sojourn myself in this city, which is perfumed by her scent; her feet were bent upon a longer journey, but I helpless knew it not.'" And again, "Open my grave when I am dead, and thou shalt see a cloud of smoke rising from out of it; then shalt thou know that the fire still burns in my dead heart—yea, it has set my winding sheet alight." And still again, "If the scent of her hair were to blow across my dust when I have been dead a hundred years, my moldering bones would rise and come dancing out of the tomb."

There is some dispute as to whether Hafiz was a Sufi or not, but the burden of authority tends to prove that he was. Certainly some of his poetry must be considered symbolic if we are to preserve any great respect for it!

The following stanzas are from his *Rubaiyat*.

His *rubai* is an epigram which takes the form of a four-line stanza, the last being the most important. Though the *rubaiyat* are frequently connected in thought, each *rubai* stands by itself and is supposed to be complete. Altogether there are seventy *rubaiyat* usually included in the work of Hafiz, though about

five are considered of doubtful origin. Translation is extremely difficult, as has been hinted, and to versify in English is doubly difficult. However, though the shades of meaning may not be exactly reproduced, yet the general thought can be retained. The translation of the following was made by Abdul Majid, and the versifying is the work of L. Cranmer-Byng:

Of that old wine some vanished Sultan grew
 Give me, that I may paint life's scenes anew.
 Oh make me heedless of the heedless world
 That I may sing the world's desire to you.

Come, love and wine beside the river's brink ;
 In every cup some shallow care we'll sink.
 Life's span is but the rose's, ten dear days ;
 Then chain the ten with laughter's golden link.

• • • •
 Youth is the tap that draws the wine most sweet.
 Unhappy lover, drink and drown defeat !
 Creation rocks to ruin in the end,
 And ruined lords their ruined halls complete.

• • • •
 A woman's smile, a lute to rouse the morn,
 A nook, a heart unbound, a flagon drawn,
 And when the red wine dances through my veins
 From Hatim I'll not beg a barley-corn.

• • • •
 My moon, in whose grave beauty day grows dim,
 A fairer disk than Kowsar's rounded rim,
 Hath cast all hearts into her dimple's well,
 And, sealed with amber, bade them sink or swim.

• • • •
 Around her waist my hand unchidèd stole :
 This much I gained, yet still desired the whole.
 My arm had circled round the citadel,
 And, still unmastered, she defied control.

I said, "Ah! pretty mole of my delight!"
 She answered, "O thou fond and foolish wight!
 No mole the mirror of my charm retains,
 'Tis thy dark glance upon my beauty bright."

Quoth I, "Your lip?" "The fount of life!" she cried.
 Quoth I, "Your mouth?" " 'Tis sugar, coral-dyed;"
 Quoth I, "Your speech?" "Ah, sweetly Hafiz sang;
 For each soft word some golden tongue is tied."

Those eyes that Babil's sorceries hath taught,
 Must all their bright enchantments come to nought?
 And that small ear—Nay! from the fadeless pearls
 Of Hafiz' song her pendant shall be wrought.

She told me, "I am yours to have and hold.
 Take heart! let care by patience be controlled."
 Ah, what is heart? Some graybeard doth reply:
 "The clot of blood a thousand cares enfold."

She gave me first the loving-cup to bind;
 The cup of cruelty she then assigned
 And when, with soul and body burned, I fell
 Dust at her feet—she gave me to the wind.

I was a beggar, of her love bereft;
 Salt rankles in the wound that parting left.
 My heavy heart one day foretold the end;
 Then fell the sword, and our one life was cleft.

Your eyes, where lies and magic play their part,
 From whose false dusk the swords of battle start,
 How soon they weary of my constant sight!
 Stones that were tears now strike me from your heart.

O time of broken vows that none would mend!
 The bitter foe was once a faithful friend.
 So to the skirts of solitude I cling,
 Lest friendship lure me to an evil end.

When tyrants rule can gold redeem the earth?
 When sorrow haunts the home can joy have birth?
 Not all the promised aeons of delight
 These seven dull days of mortal care are worth.

Oh would that Fortune met me by the way,
 That changing Time would grant me slow delay,
 And when the reins fell from the hands of youth
 That Age might prove the stirrup for my stay.

In vain pursuits the random years have flown;
 What gain is mine' from summers overthrown?
 The friends of yore are numbered with my foes;
 The lilies fall, the roses all are blown.

Each day some greater grief my heart hath borne;
 Mine eyes are pierced by separation's thorn;
 And Destiny to all my plaint replies,
 "Another load awaits another morn."

Yet what avails to foam with grief like wine!
 We may not cope with sorrows line on line.
 Those young fresh lips divorce not from the cup:
 Lips that are young make every draught divine.

Seek not to compass vengeance for thy wrong,
 But draw the sparkling wine with mirth and song.
 Take wit and wisdom to thy tent alone;
 Fools to the company of fools belong.

Cease, cease to sorrow for a world of sin;
 Forsake the world and all thou hast therein.
 Go! follow Love where wine-cups fire the gloom,
 Where the red vintage swells the tawny skin.

A girl whose figure shamed the cypress tall
 Let her bright beauty on a mirror fall.
 I laid a kerchief at her feet. She smiled,
 "What happy thought of union holds you thrall?"

Whence did the tangles of your hair arise?
 And the dreams that haunt the shadows of your eyes?

Since none have shaken petals on your path
Oh whence the attar that around you lies?

The jasmine blooms in the shadow of your hair!
Lips beyond price, since Aden's pearls lie there,
Like you, the soul is ever wine-inspired;
The wine's bright soul shines through a form as fair.

Roselit, my tears like her twin roses show.
My heart's red blood through aching eyes doth flow
She asked me, seeking for a fair reply:
"Why do thine eyes like lakes in twilight glow?"

O great of soul! How gladly would I give
All that I am to thee by whom I live!
If thou wouldst know the bitterness of hell,
Pour friendship's water through an empty sieve.

Sweet lips soon break the promise they proclaim:
God's lovers never keep them from the flame:
If the beloved yield to your desire,
Yielding, she writes the record of your fame.

I clung to the beloved's locks with tears;
I said, "Be thou physician of my fears?"
She answered: "Take me! let my tresses go!
Cling light to pleasure, not to length of years!"

" 'Twere folly to thyself to be more kind,
Or from Creation call thyself to mind.
Learn wisdom from the pupil of the eye
That looks on all men yet to self is blind."

Around Life's keep the rodent waters roar;
The measure of our years is brimming o'er.
Soon, soon, O friend, the janitor of Time
Shall cast Life's chattels through the broken door.

We hope for all things from the sky's caress.
Yet tremble as the leaf when days grow less.
You said no color beyond the black abides;
Then why the snows upon the raven tress?

O thou great Almoner of human need,
 Who solvest all, dispensing blame and meed,
 Why should I bare my secret heart to thee,
 Since all my hidden secrets thou canst read?

The rosebud hides herself for shame of Thee!
 Nor drowsed Narcissus dare to look on Thee:
 How can the rose her sovereignty proclaim?
 Her light is of the moon, the moon's from Thee

One that should dwell in squalor for a space
 Of former pride will not retain a trace;
 But some poor stranger in a foreign land
 Sighs and remembers still his native place.

The way to Thee lies over grief and pain:
 The soul gropes on, the darkness doth remain.
 We only look upon the perfect face
 When the lamp failing, shows the quest is vain.

Till the desire of love be gratified,
 Till the body's kingdom without king abide,
 My hope is ever of the Court of God,
 That all the gates of joy be open wide.

III. JAMI. Nuraddin Abd Arahman, surnamed Jami, from his native town of Jam in Khorassan, died in 1492, aged seventy-eight. He was a professed Sufi and followed rigidly the ascetic practices of the sect, rejoicing in poverty and contemptuous of wealth and honors. He was a brilliant scholar as a young man, and intolerant of backwardness in others. His conceit was colossal, and the sharpness of his tongue frequently got him into trouble.

Apropos of this trait, the following anecdote is told: One day in one of his exalted moments he remarked, "God so occupies my whole

thoughts and vision, that whatsoever comes into view from afar appears to me to be God!" Another poet standing by sneeringly asked, "What if a jackass came into view?" "I should think it was you!" was the cutting retort.

The poet tells us that when a child he was taken out into a great multitude and put close in front of the litter of a holy man whom the people had gathered to honor. Writing of the occasion many years after, Jami says:

The pure refulgence of his beaming countenance is even now, as then, clearly visible to me, and my heart still feels the joy I experienced from that happy meeting. I firmly believe that this bond of union, friendship, confidence and love, which subsequently bound the great body of pious spirits to this humble creature, is wholly due to the fortunate influence of his glance, and most devoutly do I trust that the auspiciousness of this union may cause me to be ranked among the number of his friends.

Jami was a prolific writer and is said to have composed over forty long works, of which more than twenty are to be found in the library at Oxford. Most of his writings are theological, but his most popular is a poem, *Yusuf and Zulikha*, which is admittedly the most beautiful version of that hackneyed subject that the Persian poets have composed.

It is the old story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife in Persian setting and with Persian variations. When Zulikha cannot move Yusuf by pleading nor make him yield in the splendid Palace of Pleasure, her hot love turns to a

fiercer hate and by shameless lying she causes the slave Yusuf to be cast into prison whence, however, he is freed by the speech of a nursing babe. But gossip was at work, and Zulikha was made the subject of sneers and innuendos ; her husband learned the secret, and Yusuf was again cast into prison, whence he was liberated the second time because of his marvelous interpretation of a dream of Pharaoh.

Soon the slave became the king's chief adviser and Grand Vizier. His enemies, with Zulikha, fell into disgrace. The position of the latter became pitiful in the extreme ; a widow, all her jewels gone, her clothing in rags, with wrinkled face and sightless eyes, she sat in the dust listening eagerly for the sound of the hoofs of Yusuf's proud steed. The children tremblingly called out, "Yusuf is near!" but she knew better, as she crouched tremblingly awaiting some recognition from him. "Make room! Make room!" cried the attendants, and as she heard the words and felt herself thrust aside, her coarse passion changed to a purer, better love. She begged for an interview, and when it was granted Yusuf recognized her and promised to do all that he could for her. She asked for youth, beauty and the power to win his love. The cold and chaste Yusuf granted the first two wishes, and finally when the Angel Gabriel advised it, married the charming miss of eighteen into whom the bedraggled Zulikha had been miraculously transformed. The rejuvenated couple lived in rapturous content-

ment, and Yusuf built a beautiful House of Prayer in which the now religious Zulikha could worship at ease. The Oriental mystic lays great stress on the fact that only after her idol was shattered, only after her love became a pure and holy thing, could her Beloved be hers.

The following extracts are from the translation of Ralph T. Griffith:

(In the nature of an introduction:)

No heart is that which love ne'er wounded: they
 Who know not lovers' pangs are soulless clay.
 Turn from the world, O turn thy wandering feet;
 Come to the world of Love and find it sweet.

Once to his master a disciple cried:—
 “To wisdom’s pleasant path be thou my guide.”
 “Hast thou ne’er loved?” the master answered; “learn
 The ways of love and then to me return.”
 Drink deep of earthly love, that so thy lip
 May learn the wine of holier love to sip.
 But let not form too long thy soul entrance:
 Pass o’er the bridge; with rapid feet advance.
 If thou wilt rest, thine ordered journey sped,
 Forbear to linger at the bridge’s head.
 In this orchestra full of vain deceit
 The drum of Being, each in turn, we beat.
 Each morning brings new truth to light and fame,
 And on the world falls luster from a name.
 If in one constant course the ages rolled,
 Full many a secret would remain untold.
 If the sun’s splendor never died away,
 Ne’er would the market of the stars be gay.
 If in our gardens endless frost were king,
 No rose would blossom at the kiss of Spring.



From Painting by Knöchl

ZULIKHA

"HER FACE WAS THE GARDEN OF IRAM, WHERE
ROSES OF EVERY HUE ARE FAIR."

Zulikha's beauty is thus described :

Her face was the garden of Iram, where
 Roses of every hue are fair.
 The dusky moles that enhanced the red
 Were like Moorish boys playing in each rose-bed.
 Of silver that paid no tithe, her chin
 Had a well with the Water of Life therein.
 If a sage in his thirst came near to drink,
 He would feel the spray ere he reached the brink,
 But lost were his soul if he nearer drew,
 For it was a well and a whirlpool too.

Of shoulders fairer than jasmine.
 Her breasts were orbs of a light most pure,
 Twin bubbles new-risen from fount Kafur,
 Two young pomegranates grown on one spray,
 Where bold hope never a finger might lay.
 The touchstone itself was proved false when it tried
 Her arms' fine silver thrice purified ;
 But the pearl-pure amulets fastened there
 Were the hearts of the holy absorbed in prayer.

Zulikha pleads for the love of Yusuf :

By the excellent bloom of that cheek which He gave,
 By that beauty which makes the whole world thy slave ;
 By the splendor that beams from that beautiful brow,
 That bids the full moon to thy majesty bow ;
 By the graceful gait of that cypress, by
 The delicate bow that is bent o'er thine eye ;
 By that arch of the temple devoted to prayer,
 By each fine-woven mesh of the coils of thy hair ;
 By that charming narcissus, that form arrayed
 In the sheen and glory of silk brocade ;
 By that secret thou callest a mouth, by the hair
 Thou callest the waist of that body most fair ;
 By the musky spots on thy cheek's pure rose,
 By the smile of thy lips when those buds unclose ;
 By my longing tears, by the sigh and groan

That rend my heart as I pine alone;
 By thine absence, a mountain too heavy to bear,
 By my thousand fetters of grief and care;
 By the sovereign sway of my passion, by
 My carelessness whether I live or die;
 Pity me, pity my lovelorn grief:
 Loosen my fetters and grant relief:
 An age has scorched me since over my soul
 The soft sweet air of thy garden stole.
 Be the balm of my wounds for a little; shed
 Sweet scent on the heart where the flowers are dead.
 I hunger for thee till my whole frame is weak:
 O give me the food for my soul which I seek.

This is the description of Yusuf's horse:

In his stalls had Yusuf a fairy steed,
 A courser through space of no earthly breed;
 Swift as the heavens, and black and white
 With a thousand patches of day and night;
 Now a jetty spot, now a starry blaze,
 Like Time with succession of nights and days.
 With his tail the heavenly Virgo's hair,
 With his hoof the moon was afraid to compare.
 Each foot with a golden new moon was shod,
 And the stars of its nails struck the earth as he trod.
 When his hoof smote sharp on the rugged flint
 A planet flashed forth from the new moon's dint;
 And a new moon rose in the sky when a shoe
 From the galloping foot of the courser flew.
 Like an arrow shot through its side in the chase,
 He outstripped the game in the deadly race.
 At a single bound he would spring, unpressed,
 With the lightning's speed from the east to the west.

Zulikha was an idolater, but after her sudden conversion she broke her idol:

With a hard flint stone, like the Friend, as she spoke,
 In a thousand pieces the image she broke.
 Riven and shattered the idol fell,

And with her from that moment shall all be well.
 She made her ablution, 'mid penitent sighs,
 With the blood of her heart and the tears of her eyes.
 She bent down her head to the dust; with a moan
 She made supplication to God's pure throne:—
 "O God, who lovest the humble, Thou
 To whom idols, their makers, their servants bow;
 'Tis to the light which Thy splendor lends
 To the idol's face that its worshiper bends.
 Thy love the heart of the sculptor stirs,
 And the idol is graven for worshipers.
 They bow them down to the image, and think
 That they worship Thee as before it they sink.
 To myself, O Lord, I have done this wrong,
 If mine eyes to an idol have turned so long.

Thou hast washed the dark stain of my sin away;
 Now restore the lost blessing for which I pray.
 May I feel my heart free from the brand of its woes,
 And cull from the garden of Yusuf a rose."

The meeting of Yusuf and Zulikha:

"Where is thy youth, and thy beauty, and pride?"
 "Gone, since I parted from thee!" she replied.
 "Where is the light of thine eye?" said he,
 "Drowned in blood-tears for the loss of thee."
 "Why is that cypress tree bowed and bent?"
 "By absence from thee and my long lament."
 "Where is thy pearl, and thy silver and gold,
 And the diadem bright on thy head of old?"
 "She who spoke of my loved one," she answered, "shed,
 In the praise of thy beauty, rare pearls on my head.
 In return for those jewels, a recompense meet,
 I scattered my jewels and gold at her feet.
 A crown of pure gold on her forehead I set,
 And the dust that she trod was my coronet.
 The stream of my treasure of gold ran dry;
 My heart is Love's storehouse, and I am I."

Thus was Zulikha's beauty restored:

The beauty returned which was ruined and dead,
 And her cheek gained the splendor which long had fled.
 Again shone the waters which sad years had dried,
 And the rose-bed of youth bloomed again in its pride.
 The musk was restored and the camphor withdrawn,
 And the black night followed the gray of the dawn.
 The cypress rose stately and tall as of old:
 The pure silver was free from all wrinkle and fold.
 From each musky tress fled the traces of white:
 To the black narcissus came beauty and light.

The Angel Gabriel authorizes the marriage:

Thus spoke the Angel: "To thee, O King,
 From the Lord Almighty a message I bring:
 'Mine eyes have seen her in humble mood;
 I heard her prayer when to thee she sued.
 At the sight of her labors, her prayers, and sighs,
 The waves of the sea of my pity rise.
 Her soul from the sword of despair I free,
 And here from My throne I betroth her to thee.' "



ON THE DESERT NEAR BALBEC



CHAPTER VIII

CHRONOLOGY

DATES in the following chronology of Persia are to be taken with considerable allowance, although the most doubtful are indicated as such:

2000 b. c.—Some legends place Zoroaster about this time, but others make him contemporary with Darius, and still others with Moses.

900 b. c. (about)—Lakman said to have lived; other writers believe him a contemporary of Job or Abraham; others, a councilor of David and Solomon.

700 b. c. (about)—First accounts of Persia through the Greeks.

529 b. c.—Death of Cyrus.

490 b. c.—Battle of Marathon.

485 b. c.—Death of Darius.

480 B. C.—Battle of Salamis.

479 B. C.—Battle of Plataea.

324 B. C.—Death of Alexander; Persia under the Seleucidae.

200 B. C. (about)—Legendary date of Bidpai's life.

A. D. 218—Ardishir I, son of Papakan, founded the family of Sassanidae.

363—Arabs overran Persia.

530—Indian fables (Bidpai's collection) translated into Pahlavi dialect.

Ninth Century—Persian scholarship absorbed by Islam.

1020—Ferdusi (Abdul Kasin Mansur) died, having written the *Shah-namah*.

1132—Doubtful date of death of Omar Khayyam.

1184 (about)—Musleh Addin Sadi was born.

1200 (about)—Nizami lived and wrote the *Chamshe (Five Treasures)*.

1216—Ferid Eddin Attar born.

1251—Persia conquered by Genghis Kahn.

1266—Djalal Eddin Rumi (the Mullah) died.

1388 (probably)—Mohammed Hafiz died.

1492—Nuraddin Abd Arahman (Jami) died, at the age of seventy-eight.

1848—Mohammed Shah ascended the throne.

1873—Shah of Persia visited Europe.

1914—Shah rules in limited monarchy.

EGYPT



EGYPT

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE COUNTRY. It is only with ancient Egypt that we have to do in considering the literature of that country, and the meager remains of its productions are of interest principally on account of their antiquity and because of the light they shed upon the earliest civilization of which we have any knowledge; but in the latter respect their interest is

profound to every thoughtful person. How similarly people have developed in different localities is a matter of wonder, and sets in action a train of ideas that makes one question the verity of some things in which we have been inclined to believe.

Ancient Egypt extended from the Mediterranean Sea on the north to the First Cataract of the Nile on the south, a distance of about seven hundred fifty miles, or from $31\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ to 24° north latitude. Through it runs the Nile, whose annual overflows are the source of the great fertility of the narrow valley, walled in by roughly-parallel ranges of mountains, back of which lie the limitless desert regions of Northern Africa. However, at the north, where Cairo now stands, the river forks and flows through two diverging branches into the Mediterranean Sea, enclosing a great triangle of land which is known as the Delta, because of its resemblance in shape to the Greek letter of that name. In ancient times there were said to be seven mouths to the river, and the whole country was a vast swamp that admitted of pasturage to immense herds of cattle. The Delta was known as Lower Egypt, or the North Land, and the remainder as Upper Egypt, or the South Land. In the height of their power, however, the rule of the Egyptian kings extended in every direction far beyond these narrow boundaries.

II. THE PEOPLE. The Egyptians were of mixed origin, but came to form a distinct racial



PASTIMES IN ANCIENT EGYPT

type, in which "Hamitic" and Semitic strains are clearly discernible. The *fellahin*, or farmers, of modern Egypt are the lineal descendants of this ancient Egyptian stock. Authorities differ as to all the racial elements involved and the precise process of their amalgamation. However that may be, the ancient Egyptians believed that they originated in Egypt, were distinct from all other races with which they came in contact, and that their blood should be kept free from mixture.

III. GOVERNMENT. Before the time of which there is any record there must have been two kingdoms, the North and the South, Lower and Upper Egypt, but they had become united before the first of the existing monuments was erected, as we are told by the double titles borne by the first historic kings. The earliest kings were despots, but later the nobles encroached upon the power of the sovereign, and finally the priesthood obtained practical control of the government, thus establishing an order of development which has been repeated in the history of many another country.

In the days of greatest power the Pharaoh, or king, was the high priest, a divinity by virtue of his descent from the great sun-god Ra. He ruled through a code of laws long established and administered by courts of high character. He was supported by taxes, and his armies were recruited from the people through their overlords, for the Pharaoh was the head of a feudal system much like that

which Europe had in the Middle Ages. The will of the gods was that he should rule justly and fairly, but a stronger check upon him were the powerful nobles, some of whom claimed divine origin themselves, who grew restless and rebellious when they felt he was oppressive or unfair.

IV. RELIGION. The gods of the ancient Egyptians were numberless and dependent upon the gifts of mortals for their subsistence, yet they were the dispensers of health, vigor and happiness. The gods granted most favors to those who gave most liberally to their support, and often fought for their devotees, expecting in turn their share of the spoils.

Ra was the great god, the sun-god. Osiris, originally the god of the Nile, was also later identified with the sun. Osiris had a faithful sister and wife, Isis, who was the mother of Horus. Set was the evil god who killed Osiris, fought with Horus, and whose chief function was to spread disasters over the world. We shall hear more of them in these pages of Egyptian literature.

Truth, justice and humanity were taught; family virtues were held in high esteem; children were carefully instructed and properly brought up; women, especially mothers, were held in high respect. On the whole, the moral code was a high one, but there is plenty of evidence that it was not observed any more closely than it is by the masses in our Christian countries, to say the least.

Immortality depended upon the preservation of the body, and therefore the Egyptians embalmed their dead and buried them in high and dry places out of reach of the overflowing Nile. To the efforts of the early Egyptians to preserve the bodies of their dead we are indebted for many of those massive monuments whose existence has helped us to read the history of that far-away time.

Osiris in the latest period appeared in form of the sacred bull Apis, living in an elegant temple in Memphis. When Apis died Osiris at once entered the body of a newly-born calf, upon which he stamped his seal. The priests were much disturbed till the calf was discovered. The dead Apis was enclosed in a granite sarcophagus and buried with royal honors in a rock-hewn tomb near Memphis. Other animals were worshiped—the ram, the crocodile, the hawk, etc.—as incarnations of different gods, and when they died their bodies were religiously embalmed and buried at great expense. The ape, asp, ibis and cat were sacred animals, and it is said that the Persian conquest of Egypt was made easy by driving cats ahead of the army, for no cat might be killed by an Egyptian, under penalty of death.

V. EDUCATION. For the first four years children were wholly in charge of their mothers, but afterward the fathers took upon themselves the education of the boys, and some of the precepts laid down for the guidance of sons nearly six thousand years ago we shall read.

Schools were provided for boys intended for the profession of scribes. The instruction consisted of moral precepts and writing. A good student might become a scribe and so gain exemption from military service and perhaps attain high civil office. Noble and common boys were classified together and kept with the same teacher throughout their course. Whippings and worse punishments were inflicted. An ancient papyrus gives this advice: "If you are lazy you must be whipped. If you spend your time in wishing, you will never amount to anything. Attend to your books and take advice from those who know more than you. Be strong and active in your daily work. If you wish to be happy, do as I say."

Arithmetic and geometry were developed to a sufficient degree for the practical needs of buying and selling, for measuring land and for building, but they never became exact sciences. Of astronomy the Egyptians knew considerable, and divided the year into three hundred sixty-five days, and the course of the moon was recognized as twenty-nine and a half days; in fact, their calendar is the basis of our own. Anatomy was not understood, and the knowledge of medicine was very crude.

VI. THE ARTS. The walls of the temples, tombs and monuments of Egypt are covered with paintings and drawings—some outlined in colors that remain vivid to this day, with carvings sunk below the surface of the walls (intaglios), and with bas-reliefs. The artist tried



THE SPHINX AND PYRAMIDS
AT THE RIGHT, THE GREAT PYRAMID OF KING KHUFU (CHEOPS); AT THE LEFT, THE PYRAMID OF KING KHAFRE (CHEFREN),
BEFORE WHICH SITS THE SPHINX, GUARDING IT AS A SENTINEL.

only to portray facts, and represented figures in profile only. The results are incongruous enough, as may be seen in any drawing or carving where the human form is presented.

Sculpture proper was used for portrait statues of rulers, gods and sacred animals intended for worship; and the colossal figures which still exist are a source of never-ending wonder.

Egyptian architecture is on a vast scale, simple, magnificent, sublime. Great use is made of pillars, ornamented with conventionalized flower designs, cut from single blocks of granite of enormous size that were brought hundreds of miles from the quarries of Upper Egypt. The dwelling houses of all classes were poor affairs of perishable materials, and were abandoned for new ones at the slightest provocation. The ruins of cities are recognized only by temples, statuary and monuments.

The pyramids, built by kings to cover their tombs, were of stupendous size; of the more than seventy now known the Pyramid of Cheops, near Cairo, is the largest. It covers thirteen acres of land, was originally four hundred eighty feet high and is estimated to contain about ninety million cubic yards of masonry. It is thought that a hundred thousand men working twenty years scarcely could have completed it.

VII. THE LANGUAGE. The oldest records of the Egyptian language go back nearly six thousand years, and it continued to be spoken

in Egypt until about three hundred years ago, though of course in a much changed form. In fact, scholars recognize five types of the language, no one of which would have been understood by a person knowing another. Each had its own period of use, and changed gradually into its successor as the years passed away: we could not easily understand one who spoke in the English of Chaucer's time. Of the Coptic language still used by the Christian Egyptians, the base is the archaic language, but it has been mixed with Greek and Arabic until only trained scholars can recognize the original roots. Our knowledge of Egyptian in its various forms comes through the translation of inscriptions, and is the result of years of arduous labor on the part of devoted students.

The Egyptians thought writing to be the foundation of education, and its hieroglyphics are comparatively easy of translation to the student who understands the system. Yet the original process of discovery was a difficult one.

The *hieroglyphic* system was thought by the Egyptians to have been invented by their god Thoth. On the oldest known monuments it is perfectly developed, and it remained in use to the time of the Roman occupancy. The characters are some of them phonetic, others represent ideas, and a third class of signs determine meaning to a certain extent, as when a pair of legs was drawn before another word to show it was a verb of motion. About five hundred characters were in common use.

Three other distinct graphic systems are known in Egyptian records. The *hieratic* system, as the Greeks named it, consists of an abbreviated hieroglyphic style that could be written rapidly, and was used for both secular and religious purposes until the demotic system replaced it for everything except religious writings.

The *demotic* system, pictorial representation, in time gave way wholly to arbitrary signs, principally phonetic. The characters were large, awkward to write and very numerous, so that the deciphering of books, deeds and similar papers has been extremely difficult. It came into use in the sixth or seventh century before Christ, and represented the common idiom of the people.

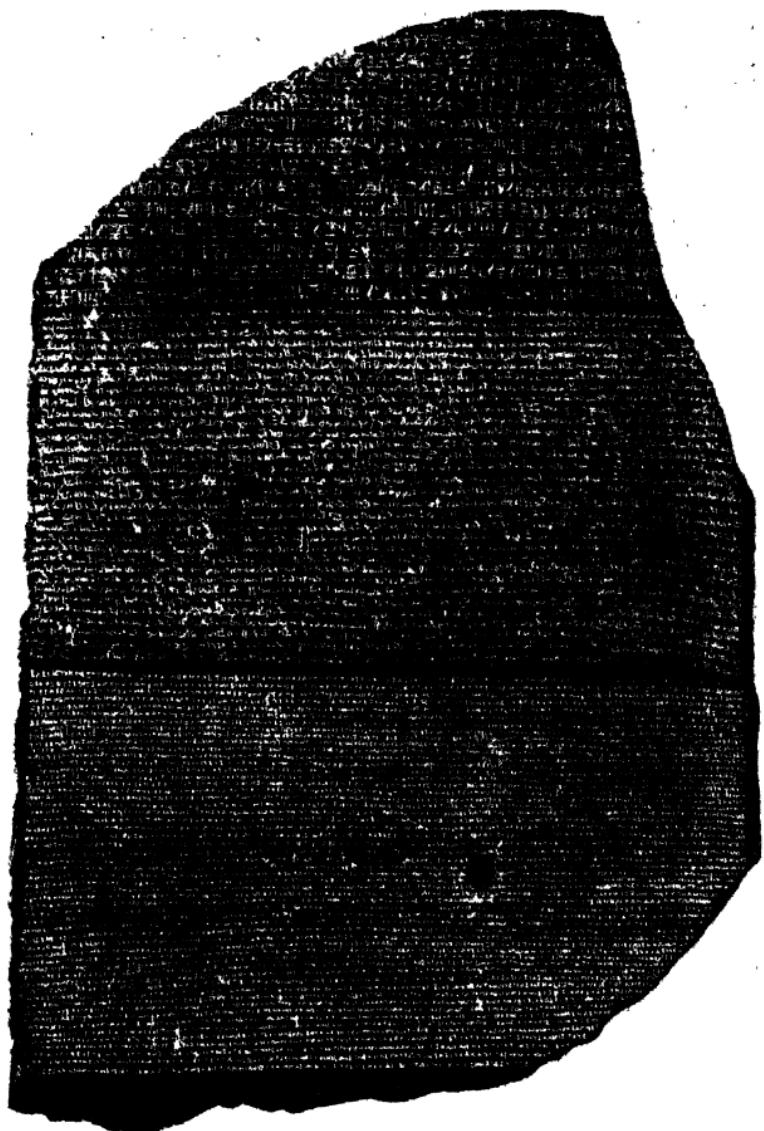
The *coptic* system contains thirty-two letters and is based upon the Greek uncials, which originated as early as the first century B. C.

At the very end of the eighteenth century a French officer engaged in building fortifications near the Rosetta mouth of the Nile found a large stone upon which were three inscriptions. The first, more fragmentary than the others, was in hieroglyphics; the second in demotic script, and the third in Greek. Scholars easily read the record in Greek and learned that it was an account of honors paid to a king of Egypt who reigned about two hundred years before Christ. This record stated that it was to be engraved in demotic characters and in hieroglyphics. Here then

was the key to the records on the monuments and temples and to the many papyrus books that had been accumulated in the years of search in Egyptian tombs. This famous Rosetta stone is now in the British Museum, an object of wonder and veneration to every one who sees it. Of the labor required to decipher what we may now read easily, too much cannot be said in praise.

VIII. HISTORY. We cannot give any adequate idea of the events of those endless reaches of time which the history of Egypt covers, but we must know a few facts to appreciate the literature of the ancient people who lived and built and wrote such ages before our era began. It is always to be remembered that there is much uncertainty about dates in such early times. This is true not only of Egypt, but of other old countries as well.

Professor Maspero has said, "The oldest monuments hitherto known scarcely transport us further than six thousand years, yet they are of an art so fine, so well determined in its main outlines and reveal so ingeniously combined a system of administration, government and religion, that we infer a long past of accumulated centuries behind them. . . . I do not think that we shall be misled in granting them forty or fifty centuries wherein to bring so complicated an achievement to a successful issue, and in placing their first appearance at eight or ten thousand years before our era."



Now in the British Museum

THE ROSETTA STONE

A BLOCK OF BLACK BASALT, 3 FT. 7 IN. IN HEIGHT, FOUND IN 1799
NEAR THE ROSETTA MOUTH OF THE NILE. IT FURNISHED THE KEY
TO THE RECORDS LEFT BY THE EGYPTIANS MANY CENTURIES AGO.

At different epochs three cities were the center of power, Memphis, Thebes and Sais, and the duration of rule therein marks three divisions in Egyptian history:

1. *The Memphite Period.* (From about 4000 b. c. to about 2500 b. c.) It was during the fourth dynasty of this period that Cheops and others lived and built their mammoth tombs (3100 to 2800 b. c.).

2. *The Theban Period.* (From about 1800 b. c. to about 1100 b. c.) About 2100 b. c. Egypt was subjected to the rule of the *Hyksos*, or “*Shepherd Kings*,” who invaded the country from Asia and held the Egyptians under their sway for more than a hundred years. It was during their time, possibly, that Joseph was sold into Egypt and the Israelites were established in the land of Goshen.

Amasis, the Egyptian king who founded the eighteenth dynasty, expelled the Hyksos, subdued Ethiopia and widened the boundaries of his kingdom in every direction. His successors followed his victorious career and built the great temples at Luxor and Karnak, as well as many a smaller one, and decorated all with obelisks and statues innumerable.

The nineteenth dynasty (1350 b. c.—1200 b. c.) began with Seti I. Great as a warrior, he was greater as a builder. “He constructed the main part of what is perhaps the most impressive edifice ever raised by men—the world-renowned Hall of Columns in the Temple of Karnak at Thebes. He also cut for himself

in the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings at Thebes the most beautiful and elaborate of all the rock-sepulchers of the Pharaohs."

Rameses II (the Great), known as Sesostris to the Greeks, reigned over sixty years and was the most powerful monarch the Egyptians ever had. Greatest of conquerors, greatest of builders, he left more records than any other king.

The exodus of the Israelites from Egypt is supposed to have taken place during the reign of Meneptha, son of Rameses II.

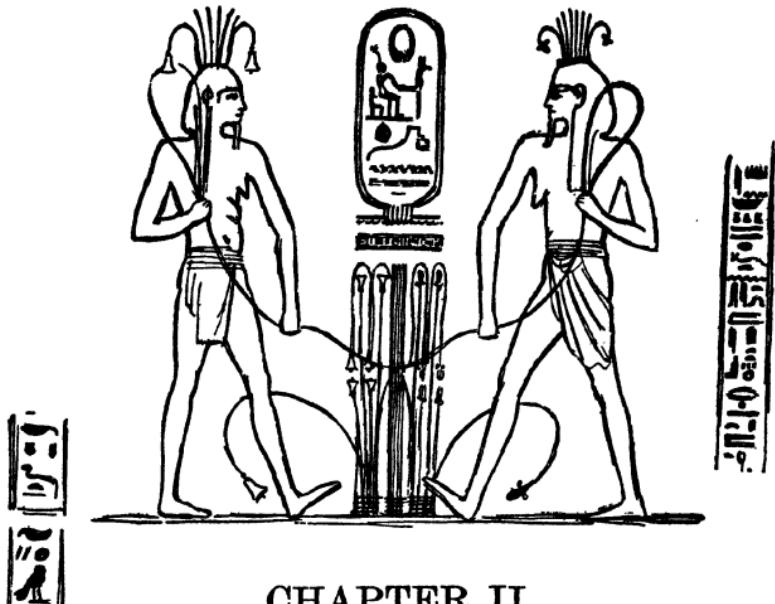
3. *The Saite Period.* (From about 1100 b. c. to 332 b. c.) This is the period of decline, and is marked by fluctuations of power. Ethiopians and Assyrians invaded and were repulsed. Thebes was depopulated, the Greeks entered the country and brought their learning and civilization with them, the King of Judah was met and killed by the Egyptians, and after many vicissitudes Egypt fell before Cambyses, the Persian king, in 525 b. c. Revolts, insurrections and resubjection followed until in 332 b. c. Egypt willingly submitted to Alexander the Great and finally lost her identity as an independent nation. At the death of Alexander, Egypt fell to Ptolemy, under whose successors Alexandria became the leading city of the world. Cleopatra was the last of the Ptolemaic line. After her came the Romans.

IX. CONCLUSION. From many points of view this introductory chapter must be considered as unsatisfactory, but it will serve to

refresh our memories for a study of the literature of a wonderful people. The interested reader can find plenty of material for wider reading in encyclopedias, histories and books of travel, for Egypt has proved marvelously attractive to every writer who has made its acquaintance.



RAISING WATER
FROM THE NILE



CHAPTER II

EARLY LITERATURE

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EGYPTIAN LITERATURE. That Egypt must have had an extensive literature, the remains we now possess bear evidence. Moreover, it was unique in that while the language and the written characters changed as the centuries rolled by, the literature remained practically the same in kind and style. It is true, however, in the period of Rameses that novels, stories and amusing works were numerous, that historical works predominated under the Ptolemies, and that during the Coptic, or Christian, period the prevalent writings were religious in type.

It must be remembered that the remains of this literature are found solely as inscriptions

upon the walls of temples and tombs, upon obelisks and other monuments, and as manuscripts written upon papyrus, which have been found in the ruins of temples or buried in the tombs. Only a few of these remains are complete, many are imperfect and most of them fragmentary. Hundreds remain yet to be deciphered, and discoveries of new material are still being made.

Systematic construction seems to have been unknown, and the literary style is plain and unornamental, though sometimes vivid and forceful. Most translations are more or less defective, and frequently the best of archeologists is obliged to interpolate words and even sentences to bring out the supposed meaning, so literal accuracy is not often to be expected. However, we may feel certain that we are not far away from the real meaning in most of the renditions which we shall quote.

II. PAPYRI. The Egyptian papyrus is a giant sedge with soft triangular stems sometimes as thick at the base as a man's arm. From the pith thin strips were cut and placed side by side on a flat surface. Across them, with the grain at right angles, a second layer was placed, and the two were pressed or rolled tightly. The natural gumminess of the strips fastened them firmly together, and thus a kind of paper was made.

In the earliest manuscripts this appears in long rectangular sheets, which were rolled up and tied with a string. One of these rolls,

which was found buried with a mummy, is one hundred thirty feet long and about a foot wide, but few of them are so unwieldy. The writing is in columns parallel to the length of the roll, and not often more than three inches wide. The oldest specimens date back to about 2000 B. C. In later manuscripts the sheets were small, laid flat one upon another and stitched together like the leaves of a book. Even in the oldest ones efforts at ornamentation were made by the use of different colored inks and by pictures and designs. We shall consider some of the best-known papyri in greater detail.

III. MONUMENTS. Under this general term we may class the temples, which are religious monuments; the tombs and pyramids, which are burial monuments; and the obelisks, statues, etc., which are really triumphal.

Of the obelisks, which are giant monoliths of red or gray granite, a number have been removed bodily from Egypt and now are well-known objects of interest in the cities of Rome, Paris, London and New York. The obelisks in London and New York are a pair known in modern times as Cleopatra's Needles, and the latter bears inscriptions celebrating the glories of Thothmes III and Rameses II.

The sphinx, a recumbent lion with the head of a man, a ram, or some other animal, is a common monument, sometimes placed in large numbers on both sides of the approach to temples, sometimes alone. The head of the sphinx represents the animal sacred to the god before

whose temple it is placed. Most famous is the great man-headed sphinx that rests at the edge of the desert about three hundred feet east of the Pyramid of Cheops. Its length is one hundred seventy-two feet, its height to the top of its head about sixty-six feet. In 1816 when the sand was excavated from between the giant paws a small temple was disclosed lying close to the breast of the sphinx. Inscriptions in it showed that Thothmes IV and Rameses II had in turn excavated the sand and cleared the great monument, whose origin even to them was unknown. The sphinx is supposed to have been made under the direction of Cephren of the Fourth Dynasty but there is no certainty of that.

The walls of the numerous temples are covered with inscriptions which oftentimes are to-day as legible as when cut in the stone thousands of years ago. They are historical or mythological in character, detailing the triumphs of the Pharaohs who erected them or celebrating the gods to whose favor the king ascribed his victories.

IV. THE PRISSE PAPYRUS. In 1847 M. Prisse d'Avennes published the famous papyrus which bears his name, but which is more commonly known as the *Precepts of Ptah Hotep*. This remarkable papyrus, spread out flat, measures about twenty-three feet seven inches in length and has an average width of five and seven-eighths inches. It contains eighteen pages of heavy hieratic writing in bold

characters of red and black, and is in excellent preservation, but a portion has been torn from the beginning, so that we have the latter part of one book and the whole of another, with a blank space of over fifty inches between them.

Just when this papyrus was discovered is unknown, but M. Prisse is said to have bought it from a *fellah* who had been employed to excavate for him and who probably found the manuscript in the tomb of an early king. M. Prisse presented the papyrus to the National Library in Paris, where it yet remains.

The antiquity of the papyrus cannot be doubted, and its date can be located with approximate certainty. It belongs to the Twelfth Dynasty (2000 b. c.). The fragmentary part is known as the *Precepts of Kegemni*, and at its close the date of its composition is given as at the end of the reign of Heuni, the next to the last king of the Third Dynasty. Heuni died about 2975 years before Christ.

The *Precepts of Ptah Hotep* follows after an interval of blank pages from which something may have been erased, and from what is said in it it would have been written in the reign of King Isesi of the Fifth Dynasty. This fact puts its date at about three hundred years later than the *Kegemni*.

Some conception of the antiquity of these impressive remains may be gained by a few comparative dates. Not till fifteen hundred years after *Kegemni* did Moses live. The time from Moses to Christ is about the same as the

years from *Kegemni* to Moses. If Chaucer died in 1400 our poetry may be said to have had a life of about five hundred years, or about one-tenth of the time between *Kegemni* and the writings of Tennyson. Think of the civilizations that have originated, flourished and passed away since those books were written, and wonder at the words that come to us across the years. Think of China, of India and the other nations of the world, and then listen to the instructions given by the solicitous *Ptah Hotep* to his son, four thousand years ago. If it seems wonderful that such literature could have been created in the morning of the world, what shall we say of the marvel of the preservation of that manuscript, written so carefully on the fragile pith of the papyrus plant.

V. “THE PRECEPTS OF KEGEMNI.” “Instruction,” or “precepts,” such as these of *Kegemni* and *Ptah Hotep* were popular textbooks in the Egyptian schools, and we owe the preservation of many of them to the schoolboy copies made in exercise books. While the Prisse papyrus is clearly lettered, there are errors in it, as though the writer was not certain always of his copy.

It is not known how much has been torn from the *Precepts of Kegemni*, nor are we sure that *Kegemni* was the writer, though the position of his name in the manuscript would seem to indicate it. But here it is:

The cautious man flourisheth, the exact one is praised; the innermost chamber openeth unto the man

of silence. Wide is the seat of the man gentle of speech ; but knives are prepared against one that forceth a path, that he advance not, save in due season.

If thou sit with a company of people, desire not the bread that thou likest : short is the time of restraining the heart, and gluttony is an abomination ; therein is the quality of a beast. A handful of water quencheth the thirst, and a mouthful of melon supporteth the heart. A base man is he that is governed by his belly ; he departeth only when he is no longer able to fill full his belly in men's houses.

If thou sit with a glutton, eat with him, then depart.

If thou drink with a drunkard, accept and his heart shall be satisfied.

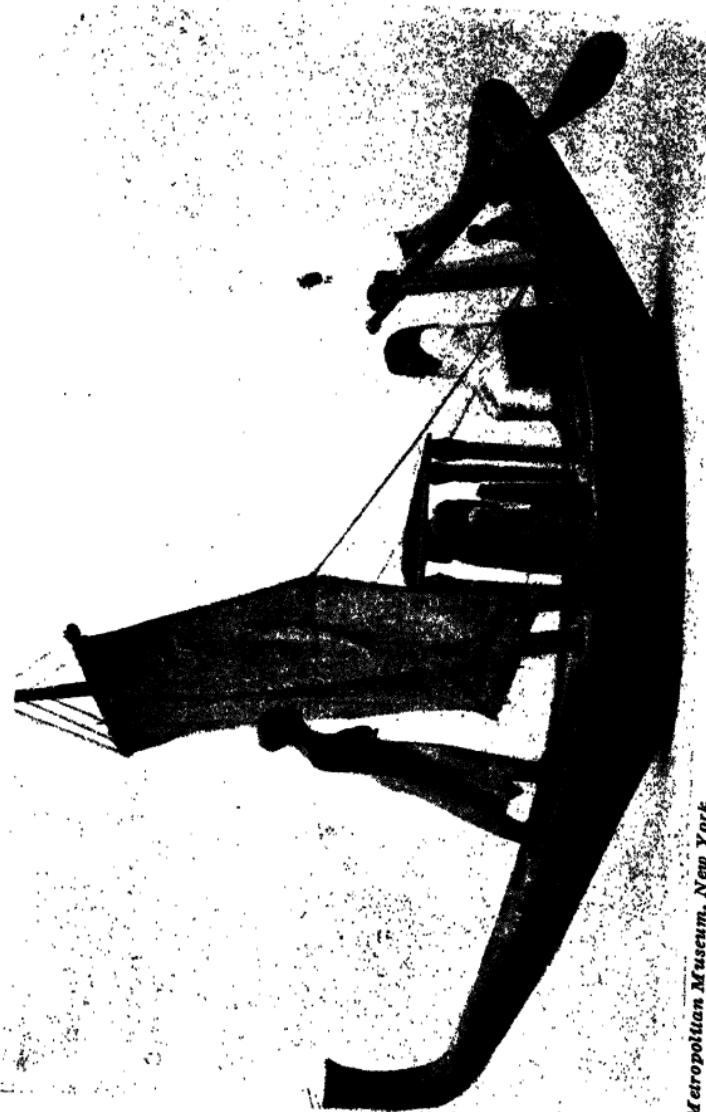
Refuse not meat when with a greedy man. Take that which he giveth thee ; set it not on one side, thinking that it will be a courteous thing.

If a man be lacking in good fellowship, no speech hath any influence over him. He is sour of face toward the glad-hearted that are kindly to him ; he is a grief unto his mother and his friends ; and all men cry, "Let thy name be known ; thou art silent in thy mouth when thou art addressed ! "

Be not haughty because of thy might in the midst of thy young soldiers. Beware of making strife, for one knoweth not the things that the God will do when He punisheth.

The Vizier caused his sons and daughters to be summoned, when he had finished the rules of the conduct of men. And they marveled when they came to him. Then he said unto them, "Hearken unto everything that is in writing in this book, even as I have said it in adding unto profitable sayings." And they cast themselves on their bellies, and they read it, even as it was in writing. And it was better in their opinion than any thing in this land unto its limits.

Now they were living when His Majesty, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, HEUNI departed, and His Majesty, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, SENFORU,



Metropolitan Museum, New York

FUNERAL BARGE OF UKH-HOTEP

was enthroned as a gracious king over the whole of this land.

Then was Kegemni made Governor of his City and Vizier.

IT IS FINISHED

VI. “THE PRECEPTS OF PTAH HOTEPE.” This complete book is divided into sections by red writing which gives quite an ornamental appearance to the manuscript. Of King Isosi we know but one fact. He sent his treasurer south, probably into Somaliland, to obtain a dwarf for him, and the expedition was successful! Our only complete copy of the *Precepts*, the one above described, was made much later than the period mentioned, probably about four thousand years ago. We subjoin a large portion of the translation of B. G. Gunn, and indicate the omitted sections:

THE PRECEPTS OF PTAH HOTEPE

The Instruction of the Governor of his City, the Vizier, Ptah Hotep, in the Reign of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Isosi, living for ever, to the end of Time.

The Governor of his City, the Vizier, Ptah Hotep, he said: “O Prince, my Lord, the end of life is at hand; old age descendeth ; feebleness cometh, and childishness is renewed. He lieth down in misery every day. The eyes are small; the ears are deaf. Energy is diminished, the heart hath no rest. The mouth is silent, and he speaketh no word; the heart stoppeth, and he remembereth not yesterday. The bones are painful throughout the body; good turneth unto evil. All taste departeth. These things doeth old age for mankind, being evil in all things. The nose is stopped and he breatheth not for weakness, whether standing or sitting.

"Command me, thy servant, therefore, to make over my princely authority to my son. Let me speak unto him the words of them that hearken to the counsel of the men of old time; those that once hearkened unto the gods. I pray thee, let this thing be done, that sin may be banished from among persons of understanding, that thou may enlighten the lands."

Said the Majestic of this God: "Instruct him, then, in the words of old time; may he be a wonder unto the children of princes, that they may enter and hearken with him. Make straight all their hearts; and discourse with him, without causing weariness."

Here begin the proverbs of fair speech, spoken by the Hereditary Chief, the Holy Father, Beloved of the God, the Eldest Son of the King, of his body, the Governor of his City, the Vizier, Ptah Hotep, when instructing the ignorant in the knowledge of exactness in fair-speaking; the glory of him that obeyeth, the shame of him that transgresseth them.

He said unto his son:

Be not proud because thou art learned; but discourse with the ignorant man, as with the sage. For no limit can be set to skill, neither is there any craftsman that possesseth full advantages. Fair speech is more rare than the emerald that is found by slave-maidens on the pebbles.

If thou find an arguer talking, one that is well disposed and wiser than thou, let thine arms fall, bend thy back, be not angry with him if he agree not with thee. Refrain from speaking evilly; oppose him not at any time when he speaketh. If he address thee as one ignorant of the matter, thine humbleness shall bear away his contentions.

If thou find an arguer talking, thy fellow, one that is within thy reach, keep not silence when he saith aught that is evil; so shalt thou be wiser than he. Great will be the applause on the part of the listeners, and thy name shall be good in the knowledge of princes.

If thou find an arguer talking, a poor man, that is

to say not thine equal, be not scornful toward him because he is lowly. Let him alone; then shall he confound himself. Question him not to please thine heart, neither pour out thy wrath upon him that is before thee; it is shameful to confuse a mean mind. If thou be about to do that which is in thine heart, overcome it as a thing rejected of princes.

If thou be a leader, as one directing the conduct of the multitude, endeavor always to be gracious, that thine own conduct be without defect. Great is Truth, appointing a straight path; never hath it been overthrown since the reign of Osiris. One that oversteppeth the laws shall be punished. Never hath evil-doing brought its venture safe to port. For he saith, "I will obtain by myself for myself," and saith not, "I will obtain because I am allowed." But the limits of justice are steadfast; it is that which a man repeateth from his father.

Cause not fear among men; for the God punisheth likewise. For there is a man that saith, "Therein is life;" and he is bereft of the bread of his mouth. There is a man that saith, "Power is therein," and he saith, "I seize for myself that which I perceive." Thus a man speaketh, and he is smitten down. It is another that attaineth by giving unto him that hath not. Never hath that which men have prepared for come to pass; for what the God hath commanded, even that thing cometh to pass. Live, therefore, in the house of kindliness, and men shall come and give gifts of themselves.

If thou be among the guests of a man that is greater than thou, accept that which he giveth thee, putting it to thy lip. If thou look at him that is before thee (thine host), pierce him not with many glances. It is abhorred of the soul to stare at him. Speak not till he address thee; one knoweth not what may be evil in his opinion. Speak when he questioneth thee; so shall thy speech be good in his opinion. The noble who sitteth before food divideth it as his soul moveth him; he giveth unto him that he would favor—it is the custom of the evening meal. It is his soul that guideth his hand. It is the noble that

bestoweth, not the underling that attaineth. Thus the eating of bread is under the providence of the God; he is an ignorant man that disputeth it.

If thou have ploughed, gather thine harvest in the field, and the God shall make it great under thine hand. Fill not thy mouth at thy neighbor's table. If a crafty man be the possessor of wealth, he stealeth like a crocodile from the priests.

Let not a man be envious that hath no children; let him be neither downcast nor quarrelsome on account of it. For a father, though great, may be grieved; as to the mother of children, she hath less peace than another.

If thou be lowly, serve a wise man, that all thine actions may be good before the God. If thou have known a man of none account that hath been advanced in rank, be not haughty toward him on account of that which thou knowest concerning him; but honor him that hath been advanced, according to that which he hath become.

Behold, riches come not of themselves; it is their rule for him that desireth them. If he bestir him and collect them himself, the God shall make him prosperous; but He shall punish him, if he be slothful.

If thou wouldest be a wise man, beget a son for the pleasing of the God. If he make straight his course after thine example, if he arrange thine affairs in due order, do unto him all that is good, for thy son is he, begotten of thine own soul. Sunder not thine heart from him, or thine own begotten shall curse thee. If he be heedless and trespass thy rules of conduct, and is violent; if every speech that cometh from his mouth be a vile word; then beat thou him, that his talk may be fitting. Keep him from those that make light of that which is commanded, for it is they that make him rebellious. And they that are guided go not astray, but they that lose their bearings cannot find a straight course.

If thou be in the chamber of council, act always according to the steps enjoined on thee at the beginning of

the day. Be not absent, or thou shalt be expelled; but be ready in entering and making report. Wide is the seat of one that hath made address. The council-chamber acteth by strict rule; and all its plans are in accordance with method. It is the God that advanceth one to a seat therein; the like is not done for elbowers.

If thou desire to continue friendship in any abode wherein thou enterest, be it as master, as brother, or as friend; wheresoever thou goest, beware of consorting with women. No place prospereth wherein that is done. Nor is it prudent to take part in it; a thousand men have been ruined for the pleasure of a little time short as a dream. Even death is reached thereby; it is a wretched thing. As for the evil liver, one leaveth him for what he doeth, he is avoided.

If thou desire that thine actions may be good, save thyself from all malice, and beware of the quality of covetousness, which is a grievous inner (?) malady. Let it not chance that thou fall thereinto. It setteth at variance fathers-in-law and the kinsmen of the daughter-in-law; it sundereth the wife and the husband. It gathereth unto itself all evils; it is the girdle of all wickedness. But the man that is just flourisheth; truth goeth in his footsteps, and he maketh habitations therein, not in the dwelling of covetousness.

If thou wouldest be wise, provide for thine house, and love thy wife that is in thine arms. Fill her stomach, clothe her back; oil is the remedy of her limbs. Gladden her heart during thy lifetime, for she is an estate profitable unto its lord. Be not harsh, for gentleness mastereth her more than strength. Give to her that for which she sigheth and that toward which her eye looketh; so shalt thou keep her in thine house.

Satisfy thine hired servants out of such things as thou hast; it is the duty of one that hath been favored of the God. In sooth, it is hard to satisfy hired servants. For one saith, “He is a lavish person; one knoweth not that

which may come from him." But on the morrow he thinketh, "He is a person of exactitude (parsimony), content therein." And when favors have been shown unto servants, they say, "We go." Peace dwelleth not in that town wherein dwell servants that are wretched.

Repeat not extravagant speech, neither listen thereto; for it is the utterance of a body heated by wrath. When such speech is repeated to thee, hearken not thereto, look to the ground. Speak not regarding it, that he that is before thee may know wisdom. If thou be commanded to do a theft, bring it to pass that the command be taken off thee, for it is a thing hateful according to law. That which destroyeth a vision is the veil over it.

If thou be powerful, make thyself to be honored for knowledge and for gentleness. Speak with authority, that is, not as if following injunctions, for he that is humble (when highly placed) falleth into errors. Exalt not thine heart, that it be not brought low. Be not silent, but beware of interruption and of answering words with heat. Put it far from thee; control thyself. The wrathful heart speaketh fiery words; it darteth out at the man of peace that approacheth, stopping his path.

One that reckoneth accounts all the day passeth not an happy moment. One that gladdeneth his heart all the day provideth not for his house. The Bowman hitteth the mark, as the steersman reacheth land, by diversity of aim. He that obeyeth his heart shall command.

If thou be great, after being of none account, and hast gotten riches after squalor, being foremost in these in the city, and hast knowledge concerning useful matters, so that promotion is come unto thee; then swathe not thine heart in thine hoard, for thou art become the steward of the endowments of the God. Thou art not the last; another shall be thine equal, and to him shall come the like fortune and station.

Plunder not the houses of tenants; neither steal the things of a friend, lest he accuse thee in thine hearing, which thrusteth back the heart. If he know of it, he will do thee an injury. Quarreling in place of friendship is a foolish thing.

If thou wouldest seek out the nature of a friend, ask it not of any companion of his; but pass a time with him alone, that thou injure not his affairs. Debate with him after a season; test his heart in an occasion of speech. When he hath told thee his past life, he hath made an opportunity that thou may either be ashamed for him or be familiar with him. Be not reserved with him when he openeth speech, neither answer him after a scornful manner. Withdraw not thyself from him, neither interrupt (?) him whose matter is not yet ended, whom it is possible to benefit.

Let thy face be bright what time thou livest. That which goeth into the storehouse must come out therefrom; and bread is to be shared. He that is grasping in entertainment shall himself have an empty belly; he that causeth strife cometh himself to sorrow. Take not such an one for thy companion. It is a man's kindly acts that are remembered of him in the years after his life.

A splendid thing is the obedience of an obedient son; he cometh in and listeneth obediently.

Excellent in hearing, excellent in speaking, is every man that obeyeth what is noble; and the obedience of an obeyer is a noble thing.

Obedience is better than all things that are; it maketh good-will.

That which is desired by the God is obedience; disobedience is abhorred of the God.

It is the obedient man that obeyeth what is said; he that loveth to obey, the same shall carry out commands.

He that obeyeth becometh one obeyed.

It is good indeed when a son obeyeth his father; and he (his father) that hath spoken hath great joy of it.

Such a son shall be mild as a master, and he that heareth him shall obey him that hath spoken. He shall be comely in body and honored by his father. His memory shall be in the mouths of the living, those upon earth, as long as they exist.

As for the fool, devoid of obedience, he doeth nothing. Knowledge he regardeth as ignorance, profitable things as hurtful things. He doeth all kind of errors, so that he is rebuked therefor every day. He liveth in death therewith; it is his food. At chattering speech he marvelleth, as at the wisdom of princes, living in death every day. He is shunned because of his misfortunes, by reason of the multitude of afflictions that cometh upon him every day.

Be thine heart overflowing; but refrain thy mouth. Let thy conduct be exact while amongst nobles, and seemly before thy lord, doing that which he hath commanded. Such a son shall speak unto them that hearken to him; moreover, his begetter shall be favored. Apply thine heart, what time thou speakest, to saying things such that the nobles who listen declare, "How excellent is that which cometh out of his mouth!"

If now thou attain my position, thy body shall flourish, the King shall be content in all that thou doest, and thou shalt gather years of life not fewer than I have passed upon earth. I have gathered even fivescore and ten years of life, for the King hath bestowed upon me favors more than upon my forefathers; this because I wrought truth and justice for the King unto mine old age.

IT IS FINISHED
FROM ITS BEGINNING TO ITS END
EVEN AS FOUND IN WRITING

VII. "THE INSTRUCTION OF AMENEMHAT."
King Amenemhat I, who ruled from 2000 to 1970 B. C., was the founder of the Twelfth Dy-

nasty, which has by some been called the Golden Age of Egypt. He was a vigorous ruler and a wise man, the father of Usertsen I who, in accordance with custom, was associated with the King during the latter years of his reign. Amenemhat I grew morose and bitter in his old age, but his rank makes the *Instructions*, which became a popular text in the schools, of great interest. Several more or less imperfect copies of it are in existence. Though less ancient than the two other books described in this chapter, we give Mr. Gunn’s version for sake of contrast:

THE INSTRUCTION OF AMENEMHAT

Beginneth here the Instruction made by the Majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Sehetpabra, Son of the Sun AMENEMHAT, the Justified.¹ He speaketh thus in discovering words of truth unto his Son, the Lord of the World:

Shine forth, he saith, even as the God. Hearken to that which I say unto thee: that thou may reign over the land, that thou may govern the world, that thou may excel in goodness.

Let one withdraw himself from his subordinates entirely. It befalleth that mankind give their hearts unto one that causeth them fear. Mix not among them alone; fill not thine heart with a brother; know not a trusted friend; make for thyself no familiar dependents; in these things is no satisfaction.

When thou liest down have care for thy very life, since friends exist not for a man in the day of misfortunes. I gave to the beggar, and caused the orphan to live; I made him that had not to attain, even as he that had.

¹ A ceremonial title applied to deceased persons, analogous to our “the late.” “Justified” is not an exact rendering, but it is usual, and will serve.

But it was the eater of my food that made insurrection against me; to whom I gave mine hands, he created disturbance thereby; they that arrayed them in my fine linen regarded me as a shadow; and it was they that anointed themselves with my spices that entered my harem.

My images are among the living; and my achievements are among men. But I have made an heroic story that hath not been heard; a great feat of arms that hath not been seen. Surely one fighteth for a lassoed ox that forgetteth yesterday²; and good fortune is of no avail unto one that cannot perceive it.

It was after the evening meal, and night was come. I took for myself an hour of ease. I lay down upon my bed, for I was weary. My heart began to wander (?). I slept. And lo! weapons were brandished, and there was conference concerning me. I acted as the serpent of the desert.

I awoke to fight; I was alone. I found one struck down; it was the captain of the guard. Had I received quickly the arms from his hand, I had driven back the dastards by smiting around. But he was not a brave man on that night, nor could I fight alone; an occasion of prowess cometh not to one surprised. Thus was I.

Behold, then, vile things came to pass, for I was without thee; the courtiers knew not that I had passed on to thee my power, I sat not with thee on the throne. Let me, then, make thy plans. Because I awed them not I was not unmindful of them; but mine heart bringeth not to remembrance the slackness of servants.

Have ever women gathered together assailants? are assassins reared within my palace? was the opening done by cutting through the ground? The underlings were deceived as to what they did.³ But misfortunes have not come in my train since my birth; nor hath there existed the equal of me as a doer of valiance.

² An allusion to the people of Egypt, whom he had freed from the foreign oppressors.

³ Referring to the attempted assassination.

I forced my way up to Elephantine, I went down unto the coast-lakes⁴; I have stood upon the boundaries of the land, and I have seen its center. I have set the limits of might by my might in my deeds.

I raised corn, I loved Nopi⁵; the Nile begged of me every valley. In my reign none hungered; none thirsted therein. They were contented in that which I did, saying concerning me, “Every commandment is meet.”

I overcame lions; I carried off crocodiles. I cast the Nubians under my feet; I carried off the Southern Nubians; I caused the Asiatics to flee, even as hounds.

I have made me an house, adorned with gold, its ceiling with *lapis lazuli*, its walls having deep foundations. Its doors are of copper, their bolts are of bronze. It is made for everlasting; eternity is in awe of it. I know every dimension thereof, O Lord of the World!

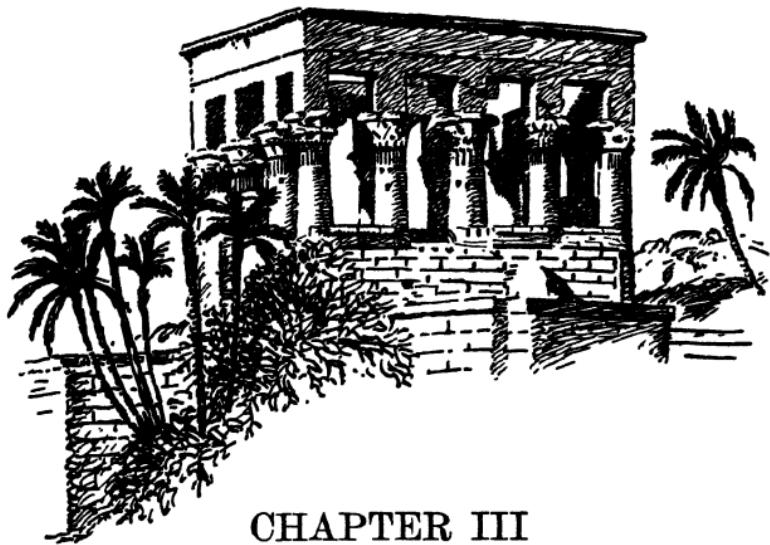
There are divers devices in buildings. I know the pronouncements of men when inquiring into its beauties; but they know not that it was without thee, O my son, Usertse; life, safe and sound, be to thee—by thy feet do I walk; thou art after mine own heart; by thine eyes do I see; born in an hour of delight, with spirits that rendered thee praise.

Behold, that which I have done at the beginning, let me set it in order for thee at the end; let me be the landing-place of that which is in thine heart. All men together set the White Crown on the offspring of the God, fixing it unto its due place. I shall begin thy praises when in the Boat of Ra. Thy kingdom hath been from primeval time; not by my doing, who have done valiant things. Raise up monuments, make beautiful thy tomb. I have fought against him whom thou knowest; for I desire not that he should be beside thy Majesty. Life, safe and sound, be to thee.

IT IS FINISHED

⁴ The limits, south and north, of his kingdom.

⁵ The god of corn.



CHAPTER III

RELIGIOUS WORKS

THE “BOOK OF THE DEAD.” The earliest religious writings are found engraved in the pyramids of the fifth and sixth dynasties, and consist of formulae supposed to be of magic value in securing the peace and happiness of the dead. A later collection of such formulae is found in the famous *Book of the Dead*, or as the Egyptians called it, from its opening words, *The Book of the Coming Forth by Day*.

Many copies of it have been found lying in the armpits of mummies, where they were placed as guides to the dead in their long journey. Some copies are brief, fragmentary and poorly executed, while others of a later date are finely written and decorated with colored pictures and designs.

It consists of magic formulae of great antiquity, of different funeral rituals, of hymns to the gods, maxims of grave import, directions for reaching the hall of Osiris and adventures of the soul after death. Some of the maxims are very old, and others were of much later date. The name in use gives no idea of the contents, and, in fact, is but a collective title for hundreds of guides differing widely in matter that were used in one form or another from time immemorial. At one time the texts were written on the sarcophagi, but later upon papyrus and buried as above described. At the time of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty a definite form containing one hundred sixty-five chapters seems to have been established, but even of this there are various models. The latest copy is of the second century A. D., consisting of one hundred sixty-six chapters, written in Coptic.

The soul of one who had been a true follower of Osiris might by the aid of these texts and passwords reach the paradise of the great god. Climbing the western hills he was met by some insect or bird that undertook his guidance. A goddess, emerging from a sycamore, handed him a dish of fruit, which if he accepted he could never more retrace his steps without her permission. Beyond the sycamore lay terrible deserts with regions of ponds and marshes all infested by poisonous serpents and ferocious animals. There were gates that opened only to the right passwords, lakes filled with consuming fire and hideous demons lying in wait.

No weak soul ever succeeded in passing this land of horror. But the strong soul, manfully fighting step by step, traversed this realm, ascended the mountains that guard the world and came to the sea across which, if he could answer successfully the questions of the god who presided over the ferry, he was taken to the other shore and guided to the Judgment Hall of Osiris, where before the god who sat upon his throne surrounded by forty-two judges he made his plea:

Hail to thee, great god! I have not committed iniquity against men! I have not oppressed the poor! I have not defaulted! I have not caused the slave to be ill-treated by his master! I have not starved or assassinated any man! I have not committed treason, or stolen temple supplies, or curtailed the sacred revenues, or used false weights, or taken the birds and fishes belonging to the gods! I am pure! There is no crime against me! Deliver me from the wrath of the gods!

While this was going on, the heart of the suppliant was placed in the magic scales, and if it was right and true then Thoth, son of Osiris, cried out, "The heart of the mortal has been weighed and found true. . . . No trace of impurity has been found. . . . Let him be as one of the favorites that follow thee."

Then the deceased received his rewards in house, garden, food and drink. Here he lived, free from labor and anxiety in heavenly security, the same kind of a life he had on earth.

The bad soul was devoured by a hideous monster, but if he showed signs of reformation he

might be allowed to enter the body of some animal, where after a series of transmigrations he was given another opportunity on earth.

II. "THE BLACK PIG." The legend related under this title in the *Book of the Dead* refers to an incident in the wars between Horus and Set, and is not found anywhere else. We give the version of M. A. Murray, who says he has not sought verbal accuracy in his translation but has endeavored to give clearly the meaning of the text:

The reason why the city of Pe was given to Horus, I know and I will tell you.

Between Horus and Set there is enmity and hatred, war and battle. Ever the fight goes on and the combatants rage furiously, and victory is not yet declared to either, though the Gods are with Horus.

Now Set is cunning and crafty, and seeks to conquer by subtlety rather than by courage and skill in the fray; and such power is his that he can take what form he will and deceive both men and Gods. This is the power of Set, but the power of Horus is not the same; for to Horus belong righteousness and truth; deceit and falsehood are not in him. Whoso gazes into the blue eyes of Horus can see the future reflected there, and both Gods and men seek Horus to learn what shall come to pass.

It came to the knowledge of Set that Ra would consult with Horus, and it seemed to him that an opportunity was at hand to injure Horus, so he took upon himself the form of a Black Pig. Fierce was his aspect, long and sharp his tusks, and his color was the blackness of the thundercloud; savage and evil was his look, and struck fear into the hearts of men.

Then came the Majesty of Ra to Horus and spoke to him saying, "Let me look in thine eyes and behold what is to come." And he gazed into the eyes of Horus, and their color was that of the Great Green Waters when

the summer sky shines upon them. And while he gazed, the Black Pig passed by.

Ra knew not that it was the Evil God, and he cried out to Horus and said, "Look at that Black Pig! Never have I seen one so huge and so fierce."

And Horus looked; neither did he know Set in this strange form, and thought it was a wild boar from the thickets of the North Country. Thus he was off his guard and unprotected against his enemy.

Then Set aimed a blow of fire at the eye of Horus, and Horus shouted aloud with the pain of the fire, and raged furiously, and cried, "It is Set, and he has smitten me with fire on the eyes."

But Set was no longer there, for he had conveyed himself away, and the Black Pig was seen no more. And Ra cursed the pig because of Set, and said, "Let the pig be an abomination to Horus." And to this day men sacrifice the pig when the Moon is at the full, because Set, the enemy of Horus, and the murderer of Osiris, took its form in order to injure the blue-eyed God. And for this reason also swineherds are unclean throughout the land of Egypt; never may they enter the temples and sacrifice to the Gods, and their sons and daughters may not marry with the worshipers of the Gods.

And when the eyes of Horus were healed, Ra gave to him the city of Pe, and he gave to him two divine brethren in the city of Pe, and two divine brethren in the city of Nekhen to be with him as everlasting judges. Then was the heart of Horus glad and he rejoiced, and at the joy of Horus the earth blossomed, and thunderclouds and rain were blotted out.

III. LITURGICAL CHANTS AND HYMNS. The chants and hymns used in the worship of the gods are perhaps the finest literature of the language. They are of deep religious feeling, pure and lofty in sentiment, and must have been sonorous and impressive in the extreme. Religion was of first importance to the Egyp-

tian, and the thought of the future life was always in his mind. The present was but the threshold of an eternity, and his feeling was so human, so much a part of the hymns that they bring him very near to us across the unnumbered centuries. The best are addressed to Osiris, but even they lack in continuity and systematic arrangement, as if they had been bodily incorporated in the Osiris cult.

The two papyri from which are taken the selections we shall use below were found in Luxor. When they were first written we do not know, but they probably date back to the Fourth Dynasty, though the literature was doubtless created long before that time and handed down by word of mouth. The copy used for the following translation was made probably about 300 b. c. in hieratic form and is now preserved in Berlin.

The sistrum was used to accompany the chants. It consisted of a metallic frame, across which were placed bars of metal that gave forth sound when the instrument was shaken. The chants were simple; “Melody embraced an interval of five—it never rose more than three and a half tones toward high and fell less toward bass.”

IV. “THE LAMENT OF ISIS AND NEPHTHYS.” The following lament is the one given by priestesses representing Isis and Nephthys at the special Osiris festivals. It is given in its entirety, except for one brief passage, as translated by James Trackle Davis:

THE LAMENT OF ISIS AND NEPHTHYS

Invocation concerning the glorious things done by the two goddesses of the temple of Osiris, Khent-Amentit,¹ the great God of Abydos; performed in the 4th summer month, 25th day; likewise to be performed in every shrine of Osiris at every one of his Heb-festivals.

Glorify his soul! Establish his dead body!
Praise his spirit! Give breath to his nostrils and to his parched throat!
Give gladness unto the heart of Isis and to that of Nephthys;

Place Horus upon the throne of his Father;
Give life, stability and power to Osiris Thentirti,
Born of the great forsaken one, she who is called also Pelses, the truthful—

Glorious are her acts, according to the words of the gods.
Behold now, Isis speaketh,—

Come to thy temple, come to thy temple, oh An!²
Come to thy temple, for thine enemies are not!
Behold the excellent sistrum-bearer—come to thy temple!
Lo I, thy sister, love thee—do not thou depart from me!
Behold Hunnu,³ the beautiful one!
Come to thy temple immediately—come to thy temple immediately! Behold thou my heart, which grieveth for thee;

Behold me seeking for thee—I am searching for thee to behold thee!

Lo, I am prevented from beholding thee—
I am prevented from beholding thee, oh An!
It is blessed to behold thee—come to the one who loveth thee!

Come to the one who loveth thee, oh thou who art beautiful, Un-Nofer,⁴ deceased.

Come to thy sister—come to thy wife—
Come to thy wife, oh thou who makest the heart to rest.

¹A title of Osiris—“Within the underworld.”

²An, the sun (or moon) god.

³Name of the sun god.

⁴One of the titles of Osiris.

I, thy sister, born of thy mother, go about to every temple of thine,

Yet thou comest not forth to me:

Gods, and men before the face of the gods, are weeping for thee at the same time, when they behold me!

Lo, I invoke thee with wailing that reacheth high as heaven—

Yet thou hearest not my voice. Lo I, thy sister, I love thee more than all the earth—

And thou lovest not another as thou dost thy sister—

Surely thou lovest not another as thou dost thy sister!

Behold now, Nephthys⁶ speaketh—

Behold the excellent sistrum-bearer! Come to thy temple!

Cause thy heart to rejoice, for thy enemies are not!

All thy sister-goddesses are at thy side and behind thy couch,

Calling upon thee with weeping—yet thou art prostrate upon thy bed!

Hearken unto the beautiful words uttered by us and by every noble one among us!

Subdue thou every sorrow which is in the hearts of us thy sisters,

Oh thou strong one among the gods—strong among men who behold thee!

We come before thee, oh prince, our lord;

Live before us, desiring to behold thee;

Turn not thou away thy face before us;

Sweeten our hearts when we behold thee, oh prince!

Beautify our hearts when we behold thee!

I, Nephthys, thy sister, I love thee:

Thy foes are subdued, there is not one remaining.

Lo, I am with thee; I shall protect thy limbs for ever, eternally.

Behold now, Isis speaketh—

Praised be An; thou shinest upon us from heaven every day,

⁶Sister of Isis and Osiris.

Yet can we not behold thy beams.

Tehuti⁶ protecteth thee; he causeth thy soul to be established within the Maadet boat,⁷ by the power of thy name of "Iah"!

Come to me; for I would behold thee and thy beauties by means of the Uazit eye⁸—

By the power of thy name of "Lord of the six festivals!" Thy royal attendants are by thy side, nor go they forth from thee;

Thou takest possession of heaven by the greatness of thy terrors, and by the power of thy name of "Prince of the fifteen festivals!"

Thou shinest upon us like Ra, the lord—

Glow thou above us like Tum.

Gods and men live when beholding thee—shine thou upon us;

Brighten thou the two lands;⁹

The two horizons are fitted for thy pathways.

Gods together with men are with thee;

No harm cometh unto them from thy shining,

Nor from thy journeying in the celestial boat¹⁰ above.

Thy enemies have ceased to be, for I am protecting thee, oh Ra, lord!

Come thou to us as a babe, thou first great Sun god.

Depart not from us who behold thee!

There proceedeth from thee the strong Orion in heaven at evening, at the resting of every day!

Lo, it is I, at the approach of the Sothis period, who doth watch for him.

Nor will I leave off watching for him; for that which proceedeth from thee is revered.

An emanation from thee causeth life to gods and men, reptiles and animals, and they live by means thereof.

⁶Thoth, God of Wisdom.

⁷Sunset boat.

⁸Magic eye of Osiris—bringing health and happiness to wearer.

⁹Upper and Lower Egypt.

¹⁰Boat of Ra, sun god.

Come thou to us from thy chamber, in the day when thy soul begetteth emanations—

The day when offerings upon offerings are made to thy spirit, which causeth the gods and men likewise to live.

Praise be to the Lord, for there is no god like unto thee, oh Tum!¹¹

Thy soul possesseth the earth, and thy likenesses the underworld;

Lo, it is prepared for and containeth thy hidden shrine.

Thy wife is ready to protect thee, and thy son Horus also, as prince of the lands.

• • • • •
Come to Aper! Behold thou thy mother, Nut, oh thou lovely child!

Depart thou not from her! Come to her breasts; abundance is therein!

Thy sister, too, is beautiful, depart thou not from her, oh son!

• • • • •
Thou shalt rest beside thy mother eternally; She preserveth thy limbs and procureth terror among thy enemies, for she protecteth thy members for ever.

Behold the excellent sistrum-bearer! Come to thy temple! Come, behold thou thy son Horus as prince of gods and men;

He taketh possession of the cities and the nomes by the magnitude of his terrors;

Heaven and earth are filled with fear of him, And the barbarians are submissive under his terrors. Thy children are among gods and men,

And the eastern and western horizons are among the attributes of thy producing;

Thy two sisters are at thy side, purifying thy soul, And thy son Horus admitteth thine attributes. There cometh for funereal and other offerings—beer, bulls and geese—for thee:

¹¹Tum or Atum—sun, father of Osiris, god of Heliopolis.

Tehuti proclaimeth thy Heb-festival, and invoketh thee
with his protecting formulae;
Horus covereth thy limbs with his protections;
Every day thy son Horus glorifieth thy spirit,
And he avengeth thy name by offerings for thy soul
placed at thy secret shrine.
As for the gods, their arms bear libation vases for the
purifying of thy spirit.
Come to thy children, oh prince, our lord, nor depart
thou from them.

Lo! he comes!

V. THE CHANTS. The chants from which the following extracts are taken were translated by Mr. Davis from the Berlin papyrus to which we have alluded above. There seems to us a lack of continuity in the chants, a faulty arrangement, and often confusion both as to the speaker and the god addressed or spoken of. Doubtless much of this would disappear if we could hear the chants given as was the practice, something like our old miracle plays, with no little acting and many spectacular effects. The priests were intelligent men, devoted to their profession and not averse to securing all the honors and emoluments that belonged to their holy order, and it is known that they systematically deceived the people and devised terrorizing and spectacular effects, which they attributed directly to the gods.

A further cause of the apparent confusion may be found in the composite character Osiris bears as chief god. It will be remembered that in the earliest times each locality had its own god with its own peculiar attributes, but that

with the lapse of time the Osiris cult predominated and gradually absorbed the other gods and their attributes. This accounts in a measure for the multiplicity of the names by which the great god was called. Each of these gods had one or more animals sacred to him, animals which were brought out at the ceremonies and worshiped as the representation of the god.

The extracts are given in the order in which they appear, and omitted passages are appropriately indicated. A colophon at the end of the original chants pretends to give the facts of the compilation.

THE CHANTS

Beginning in front of the temples, during the Heb-festivals of Isis and Nephthys, and performed before the shrine of Osiris, Khent-Amentit, the great God, lord of Abydos, in the 4th month of Inundation, on the 22nd day and continued to the 26th day. Purify all that which appertains to the temple; bring forth the utensils of the priestesses, who have performed the ablutions, their arms not being bared, their hair flowing over their shoulders and their heads crowned with woolen scarves; a musical instrument in their arms, and their names inscribed upon their shoulders, dedicated to the service of Isis and Nephthys. Let them utter praises in the temples according to this writing, before this God. Let them say :

Behold the lord Osiris! (Repeat four times the formula.)
Is not his Khér-Heb priest held in awe in this temple—
great in heaven and great on earth? (Repeat four times the formula.)

Are not the two impersonators of the goddesses, and Hunnu, the beautiful, approaching to thy shrine at this moment? (Repeat twice.)

Do we not behold the excellent sistrum-bearer approaching to thy temple and drawing nigh, though thou hast departed from us?

Lo, Hunnu, the beautiful, passeth over the land hourly and yearly, at his proper season;

He, the purified image of his father Tenen, the essence of deep mysteries:

He proceedeth from Tum, the most excellent lord:

Perfect is he, like his father, the eldest god born of the body of his mother!

Come thou to us with thy attributes:

Let those among us who travel not thy path be embraced by thee:

Beautiful of face and greatly beloved is the image of Tenen,¹ male lord of love, adored when he exhibiteth himself.

His limbs fail from his being bound;—

Come thou in peace, oh thou lord of those among us who behold the two goddesses united!

Afflictions and evils exist not for thy members, for they are not of thy creation.

Oh thou, our chief, turn again thy face toward us,— thou mighty one, great one among the gods!

The path that is visible to thee is one that cannot be described, oh thou child Hunnu,

For it doth remain, though thou goest forth through heaven and earth with thy attributes!

Lo, thou art as the Bull of the two goddesses—come thou, child growing in peace, our lord!

Behold us! Thy essence existeth with us like as the essence of Tebha² existeth in the place of his destruction.

Come thou in peace, oh great child of his father Mentu!

Within thy temple fear thou not:

Thy son Horus avengeth thee, and he woundeth and carrieth away him who lurked in his den,

He whose name a daily flame destroyeth from among the gods—Tebha perisheth as waste matter.

¹Osiris.

²Name of Set.



OBELISK AT KARNAK

THE CARVED INSCRIPTIONS ON THE MONUMENT ARE STILL WONDER-
FULLY CLEAR AND DISTINCT.

As for thee, thou hast thy temple;
 Therein fear thou not Set, nor every calamity done by
 him or brought about by him.
 Nut³ proceedeth forth, and embraceth thee with joyful-
 ness;
 Travel thou through the land among us, odorous at thy
 coming forth.
 Rebels behold us gazing upon thy face, glowing in its
 marvelousness.
 Behold! our lord is upon our left hand, and behold the
 beautiful face of the beloved lord turned toward
 us!
 Lo! the Bull, begotten of the two cows Isis and Nephthys!
 Lo! there cometh the bearer of the bronze-colored sistrum,
 as the praises increase;
 Beautiful when he beholdeth him, the lord, among the
 seated ones—
 He, the progeny of the two cows Isis and Nephthys, the
 child surpassingly beautiful!
 He appeareth unto us in thy image, like the one beloved.
 Behold thou me, thy sister Isis, loved of thy heart, loved
 by thy body;
 Loved art thou, because of the inundation of the land this
 day.
 Travel thou among us, oh thou praised one—
 Raise us living in place of what thou hast made empty.
 Come thou in peace, oh our lord, whom we behold; our
 prince!
 Approach in peace; drive away tempest from before our
 temple;
 Send thy protection over us like a male protector!
 (Repeat.)
 Lo! the two goddesses! Behold Osiris, bull of Amentit,
 who is alone established!
 Very great is he among the gods; the virile infant, the
 great heir of Sab,⁴ born the image of the God of
 Gods!

³Goddess of night, mother of Osiris.

⁴God of earth, father of Osiris.

Come thou to the two widowed goddesses!
There goeth about thee the whole circle of the gods, and
they meet with thee!

Make a shadow in the land as doth Ra: inflame the heart,
that thou mayest escape evil:

Inflame the heart, to cause thee to come after me!
Lo! thou canst not prevent it from turning me toward
thee.

Firm are the dwellings of Osiris returning on his paths!
I am seeking after love: behold me existing in the city,
great are its walls:

I grieve for thy love toward me—come thou only, now
that thou hast departed!

Behold thy son, who causeth Tebha to retreat from de-
struction!

Hidden am I among the plants, and concealed is thy son
that he cannot answer to thee, while this great
calamity remaineth!

Yet concerning thee, there is no likeness of thy flesh left:
I follow thee alone and surround the plants, each of
which holdeth danger for thy son—

Lo, I, a woman, in front of all!

Come in peace because of our love for thee—come like
the breath, like my love at beholding thee!

My arms are raised for thy protection; love thou me!
Love thou me in the two orbits of the Realms of Osiris,
full of my pondering about thee!

There thou dost receive a fillet for the hair among them
who dwell therein;

Breezes blow for thee with perfume, oh husband, elder,
lord beloved!

Come thou in peace to thy temple—lo, the excellent sis-
trum-bearer approacheth to thy house, with his
instrument of music on his arm.

Come thou to us in peace twice renewed! Praise the
child!

The elder cometh in peace, rejoicing, and there cometh the looked-for ruler of Egypt, the prince eternal, as "Still Heart."

As "Still Heart" is thy heart, oh our lord; come thou to thy temple—fear thou not the great evils.

Dost thou not behold and hear the words uttered at thy Heb-festival?

Great lord, plant giving life, granting twice over the peace of the gods!

There are funeral offerings for the souls of the deceased, and for Seshta,⁵ the lord of the funeral couch, the lord of the sacred eye, in the holy horizon of the temple.

He shineth at his season, and is brilliant in his hour,—
Thou art Khu, who art accompanied by radiances.

Shine thou at the left hand of Tum—

Behold, thou art upon the seat of Ra; revealing his brilliances.

Thy mummy flieth with thy soul toward Ra.

Thou illuminest at the daybreak, and thou restest at evening, this being thy daily work;

For thou art at the left hand of Tum the everlasting, eternal. Thou risest, and hateful wickedness is restrained even before it is conceived, before its calamity cometh upon thee.

He turneth back the attack of foes that come fiercely against him.

The god Imsehti,⁶ he is thy heir;

Cause thou every one of the gods to praise him.

Exalt the circle of the gods by thy victory; occupy thyself with Ra every day.

Behold thou the image on thy left hand—behold thou the image of living beings, for thou art Tum, the forerunner of Ra.

There cometh to thee the entire circle of the gods above thy head, invoking joy upon thy head, and falling flame upon thine enemies.

⁵One of the gods of the underworld. ⁶God of light.

There is praise to thee from us, that thy flesh may embrace again thy bones; thy word is decreed every day.

Approach thou like Tum in his season, turning not: thy sinews are strong in thee, oh thou Opener-of-Ways!

For thee are the two, Isis and Nephthys—do thou strengthen us, for they ponder on thy image.

Thy limbs are as mutilated unto thee; they seek to bind together thy dead body.

No calamity cometh to them when approaching to thee with hair unbound!

Come thou to us entirely, for thou rememberest:

Thou comest with thy attributes before the land; modify thy power.

For thy peace is proclaimed to us, oh lord, heir of the two thrones, god alone excellent, designed of the gods: every god adoreth thee!

Thou comest; it is thy temple; fear not, beloved of Ra, beloved of thy two images;

Be peaceful in thy temple; thy words are eternal!

Lo! the two representatives of the goddesses! Lo! the excellent sistrum-bearer!

Come to thy temple—he rejoiceth twice over in thy temple because of thee, oh child, like one beloved!

Behold thou! Come, come to us: great is thy protection, thou whom we love: come thou to thy temple, nor fear thou.

Behold the gods existing in heaven! Behold the gods existing on earth!

Behold the gods existing in the Place of the Dead! Behold the gods existing in the expanse of the universe!

Come after us who are under thy lady, every one beloved by thee, the eldest-born, lord of love; to him be praise!

Come to me, thou uniter of heaven to earth, who causeth his shadow daily in the land, messenger of heaven to earth!

I am inflamed with loving thee! Hail! Approach!
 Behold, I weep for thee alone; come to me who runneth
 because of my desire to behold thee;
 While I am behind thee I desire to behold thy face!
 Hail, thou who art invoked in thy temple, being pro-
 tected twice over in peace!
 Hail to thee twice over! Our lord cometh to his temple;
 our arms shall protect him behind his temple.
 Our lord cometh in peace to his place: when thou art
 established in thy temple, fear thou not!
 Lo! praised twice over is our lord, with acclamation,
 because God is great.
 Come thou in peace and truth; go thou forth under Ra,
 masterful among the gods, approved one!
 Come in peace, thou looked-for child!
 Come thou with thy attributes as a child: the evil one
 has fallen; Horus is as a prince.
 He is great toward thee; he is not exalted above thee in
 his circuit.
 Lo, the two goddesses, the ones loving the father, lord
 of rejoicings!
 The hearts of the circle of the gods of the region of
 Fayum rejoice for thee;
 Thy holy temple holdeth thy beauties; the circle of the
 gods is filled with awe at thy terribleness and the
 land trembleth at thy terror.
 I am thy wife, made as thou art, the elder sister, soul of
 her brother.
 He cometh and is visible, the lord beloved, praised twice
 over, the great Egg.
 He cometh and is visible, the babe; the child advanceth,
 he cometh and is visible.
 The extent of the earth weepeth for thee; the regions
 lament for thee, Seshta;
 Heaven and earth weep for thee, for great art thou
 among the gods.
 There are not a few who adore thy soul—come to thy
 temple, nor fear thou.

Come in peace, lord of Sais; her¹ two arms are stretched toward thee, oh Shenthit,² and her heart goeth forth to thee!

Thou art as God—come forth with godly amulets, for lo! they are not over his child to protect him.

Thy hair is like turquoise over his body, at thy coming into the cultivated fields:

With turquoise is thy hair twined and with lapis lazuli, the finest of lapis lazuli:

Lo! the lapis lazuli is above thy hair: thy skin and thy flesh are like iron of the south; thy bones are formed of silver.

I am as a child: thy teeth are to thee as fine lapis lazuli: Sweet-scented odors are upon thy hair, with unguents that proceed from himself.

Chiefs are before thee as lapis lazuli.

Remove thou storms of rain and give thou sunshine to the land, with fecundity during the night-time.

Come to thy temple, oh Osiris Khent-Amentit; come to thy temple!

Come with the body of the Uraeus on thy head: his two eyes shine over the two regions of the gods;

Exalted twice over is the prince, our lord.

Thy foes are destined for slaughter, since they are not steadfast at all because of thy name.

Make firm thy limbs for thee, oh Un-Nofer—life, stability and health;

For thy flesh causeth the heart to rest, oh Osiris, beautiful.

Lo, there goeth forth with thee, and in front of thee, this god Hu, and Tatnen, thy father, who supporteth heaven; and thou art the fourth god who progresseth therein.

Thy soul flyeth to the east, because thou art as the image of Ra.

Those existing in the realms of the dead are accepted with rejoicing:

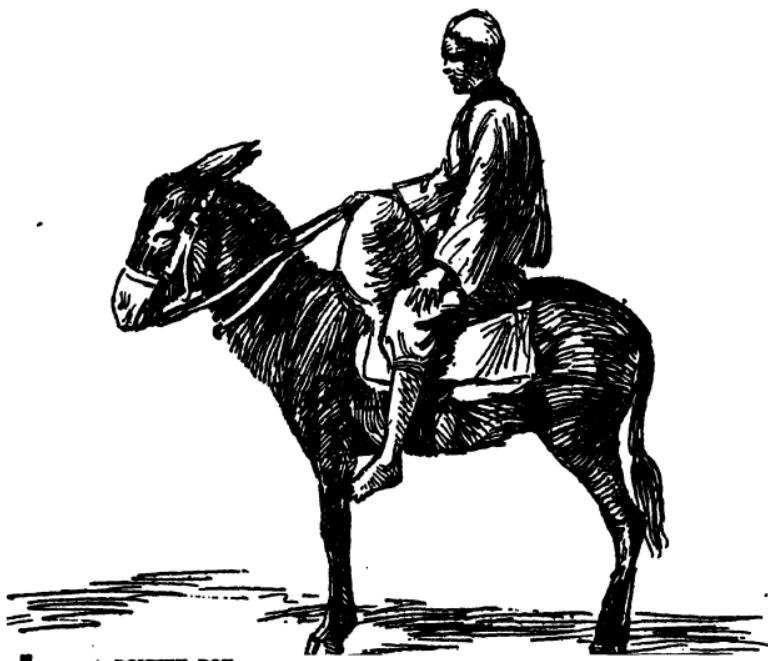
¹I. e. the 'City's.

²Osiris.

Sab, who existeth therein, openeth unto thee.
 They come to thee with an offering, and travel to thee
 with an offering from Deddu.³
 Osiris is exalted before thee—he is exalted twice over
 in peace.
 There cometh unto thee Isis, lady of the horizon, who
 hath begotten herself alone in the image of the
 gods.

It is she who is avenged before thee—it is she who is
 avenged before thee!
 Come forth as Ra; come forth as the pupil of the eye
 that beholdeth Tum, when Ra shineth as chief
 twice over!
 Behold! He cometh!

³The Celestial City.



A DONKEY BOY



CHAPTER IV

LEGENDS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

MYTHOLOGY. Mythology is elementary religion; the myths of a people are the tales of their gods. Every nation that has developed a religion of its own has passed through a stage of belief in the impossible, of hero-worship, of god worship, of polytheism. The Egyptian people never passed beyond that stage, whatever the priests may have known.

Fortunately, we have rather full accounts of these myths in the monuments and the papyri of those olden times. Many of these have been translated into English and are our common property. Others were heard by the Greeks and by them recorded where they may be read by students of that language. They are ex-

ceedingly interesting to the archaeologist, and not a few are entertaining to the general reader. However, it is impossible to give more than a glance at a few of them, and it is not with the idea of enabling the reader to comprehend the complicated and chaotic mythology of the Egyptians that the free translations given in this chapter are set before him. Rather is it for the purpose of throwing a little light upon that curious old people, and giving a few moments of entertainment.

II. OSIRIS. What is now known about the worship of Osiris has been learned principally from a ritual sculptured on the walls of the temple of Denderah, where it is given with minute exactness.

For a fascinating account of the death of Osiris and the wanderings of Isis the student must go to a treatise that was written by Plutarch, a Greek historian of the second century A. D., to a woman named Klea. Both the writer and the woman had been initiated by the Egyptian priests into the mysteries of Osiris worship, so the latter may be considered to speak with a certain measure of authority. A portion of the account follows:

In the beginning Ra cursed Nut, and his curse was that none of her children should be born on any day of any year. And Nut cried to Thoth who loved her, Thoth, the twice great, god of magic and learning and wisdom, he whom the Greeks called Hermes Trismegistos.

Though the curse of the great God Ra once uttered could never be recalled, Thoth by his wisdom opened a way of escape. He went to the Moon-god, whose bright-

ness was almost equal to that of the Sun itself, and challenged him to a game of dice. Great were the stakes on either side, but the Moon's were the greatest, for he wagered his own light. Game after game they played and always the luck was with Thoth, till the Moon would play no more. Then Thoth, the twice great, gathered up the light he had won, and by his power and might he formed it into five days. And since that time the Moon has not had light enough to shine throughout the month; but dwindleth away into darkness, and then comes slowly to his full glory; for the light of five whole days was taken from him.

And these five days Thoth placed between the end of the old year and the beginning of the new year, keeping them distinct from both; and on these five days the five children of Nut were born; Osiris on the first day, Horus on the second, Set on the third, Isis on the fourth, and Nephthys on the fifth. Thus the curse of Ra was both fulfilled and made of no effect, for the days on which the children of Nut were born belonged to no year.

When Osiris was born, wonders and marvels, prodigies and signs, were heard and seen throughout the world, for a voice cried over the whole earth, "The Lord of all comes forth to the light." And a woman drawing water from the holy place of the temple was filled with the divine afflatus and rushed forth crying, "Osiris the King is born."

Now Egypt was a barbarous country where men fought together and ate human flesh; naught did they know of the gods, lawless were they and savage. But Osiris became the King of Egypt, and he showed his people how to till the land and to plant corn and the vine, and he taught them the honor due to the Gods, and made laws, and abolished their barbarous and savage customs. Wherever he went, the people bowed at his feet, for they loved the very ground he trod on; and whatever he commanded, that they did. Thus did Osiris rule over the Egyptians till, with music playing and banners flying,

he passed out of Egypt to bring all nations beneath his gracious sway.

But Set hated his brother Osiris, and he gathered to himself seventy-two conspirators, and with them was Aso, Queen of Ethiopia. And they made a plan that when Osiris returned they should kill him and place Set on the throne; but they hid their plans, and with smiling faces went out to meet Osiris when he re-entered Egypt in triumph.

In secret they met again and again, in secret also they prepared a coffer made of costly wood painted and decorated with rich designs and glowing colors, an interweaving of tints and a wealth of cunning workmanship, so that all who saw it longed to have it for their own. Set, that Wicked One, had in secret measured the body of Osiris, and the coffer was made to fit the body of the King, for this was part of the plan.

When all was ready, Set bade his brother and the seventy-two conspirators to a feast in his great banqueting-hall. When the feast was over, they sang the chant of Maneros, as was the custom, and slaves carried round cups of wine and threw garlands of flowers round the necks of the guests, and poured perfume upon them, till the hall was filled with sweet odors. And while their hearts were glad, slaves entered bearing the coffer, and all the guests cried out at the sight of its beauty.

Then Set stood up in his place and said, "He who lies down in this coffer and whom it fits, to that man I will give it." His words were sweet as honey, but in his heart was the bitterness of evil.

One after one, the conspirators lay down in the coffer with jests and laughter; for one it was too long, and for another it was too short, and for a third it was too wide, and for a fourth too narrow. Then came Osiris to take his turn, and he, all unsuspecting, lay down in it. At once the conspirators seized the lid and clapped it on; some nailed it firmly in its place, while others poured molten lead into all the openings lest he should breathe and live. Thus died the great Osiris, he who is called

Un-Nofer the Triumphant, and by his death he entered into the Duat, and became King of the Dead and Ruler of those who are in the West.

The conspirators lifted the chest, which was now a coffin, and carried it to the river-bank. They flung it far into the water, and Hapi the Nile-god caught it and carried it upon his stream to the sea; the Great Green Waters received it and the waves bore it to Byblos and lifted it into a tamarisk-tree that grew by the shore. Then the tree shot forth great branches and put out leaves and flowers to make a fit resting-place for the God, and the fame of its beauty went throughout the land.

Now Isis feared Set exceedingly. His smooth words did not deceive her, and she knew of his enmity to Osiris, but the great King would not believe in his brother's wickedness. When the soul of Osiris passed from his body, at once Isis was aware that he was dead, though no man told her. She took her little son, whom men call Harpocrates, or Horus the Child, and fled with him to the marshes of the Delta, and hid him in the city of Pe.

Ancient and gray was this city of Pe and it stood on an island; there dwelt the goddess Uazet, whom men call also Buto and Latona, for she is worshiped under many names. Uazet took the child and sheltered him, and Isis by her divine power loosed the island from its moorings, and it floated on the surface of the Great Green Waters, so that no man could tell where to find it. For she feared the power of Set lest he should destroy the child as he had destroyed the father.

As the souls of men cannot rest until the funeral rites are performed and the funeral sacrifices offered, she journeyed, solitary and alone, to seek the body of her husband, and bury it as became his greatness. Many people did she meet, both men and women, but none had seen the chest, and in this matter her power was of no avail. Then she thought to ask the children, and at once they told her of a painted coffer floating on the Nile. And to this day children have prophetic power



ISIS

A LOW RELIEF FROM TEMPLE OF HATHOR, DENDE

and can declare the will of the gods and the things that are yet for to come.

The King of Byblos had cut down the tamarisk tree without knowing it contained the coffin of Osiris and had set it up as a column in his palace. Isis in her search reached the kingdom of Byblos and cured by magic the King's little son, who was dying from an unknown disease. As a reward she was given the tamarisk trunk, which she split open and from it released the coffin and the body of the god.

But Isis took the coffin on a boat and sailed away from Byblos, and when the waves of the river Phaedrus, lashed by the wind, threatened to sweep the coffin away, she dried up the water by her magical spells. Then, in a solitary place, she opened the coffin, and, gazing upon the face of the dead god, she mourned and lamented.

Now some say that when Isis left Byblos she took Diktys with her, and that he fell out of the boat and was drowned. Others say that the sound of her lamentation was so terrible in its grief that his heart broke and he died. But I think that he remained in Byblos; and because he had lain in the arms of the Divine Mother, and had passed through the purifying fire, he grew up to be a great and noble King, ruling his people wisely.

Then Isis hid the coffin and set out for the city of Pe, where it stood on the floating island and where her little son Horus was safe under the care of Uazet, the goddess of the North Country. And while she was away, Set came hunting wild boars with his dogs. He hunted by moonlight, for he loved the night, when all evil red things are abroad; and the air was filled with the whoop and halloo of the huntsman and the cries of the dogs as they rushed after their quarry. And as he dashed past, Set saw the painted chest, the colors glinting and gleaming in the moonlight.

At that sight, hatred and anger came upon him like a red cloud, and he raged like a panther of the South. He dragged the coffin from the place where it was hidden and forced it open; he seized the body and tore it into fourteen pieces, and by his mighty and divine strength he scattered the pieces throughout the land of Egypt. And he laughed and said, "It is not possible to destroy the body of a god, but I have done what is impossible, I have destroyed Osiris." And his laughter echoed across the world, and those who heard it fled trembling.

When Isis returned, she found naught but the broken coffin, and knew that Set had done this thing. All her search was now to begin again. She took a little shallop made of papyrus-reeds lashed together, and sailed through the marshes to look for the pieces of Osiris' body, and all the birds and beasts went with her to help her; and to this day the crocodiles will not touch a boat of papyrus-reeds, for they think it is the weary goddess still pursuing her search.

A mighty and a cunning enemy was hers, and by wisdom only could he be overcome; therefore, where-soever she found a fragment of the divine body, she built a beautiful shrine and performed the funeral rites as though she had buried it there. But in truth she took the fragments with her; and when, after long wan-derings, she had found all, by the mighty power of her magic she united them again as one body. For when Horus the Child should be grown to manhood, then he should fight with Set and avenge his father; and after he had obtained the victory Osiris should live again.

But until that day Osiris lives in the Duat, where he rules the Dead wisely and nobly as he ruled the living when on earth. For though Horus fights with Set and the battles rage furiously, yet the decisive victory is not yet accomplished, and Osiris has never returned to earth again.

III. HORUS. The god Horus, prototype of the Greek Apollo, son of Isis, whose symbol is

always the hawk, was worshiped throughout the country, although he was the especial patron of Upper Egypt, where his cult seemed to have had its most important center at Edfu and where the ruins of a magnificent temple may still be seen—one of the finest in that land of wondrous structures.

He is the personification of the sun, which rises in its glory ready to begin again his victorious fight with Set and the powers of darkness. It is his connection with the sun that joins him with Osiris, the god of the dying day, and Ra, god of the midday sun. From the eye wounded in his combat with Set the blood drips down and creates plants, animals and all good things.

Upon the inner side of the wall surrounding the temple of Edfu is cut an account of the war between Horus and Set. The temple was about a hundred eighty years in building, and the sculptures were made about 100 B. C., during the reign of the Ptolemaic kings. The ruins are among the best preserved in Egypt, but the inscriptions have been somewhat mutilated by vandal hands. From the inscription we learn that human sacrifices were made, though probably not so late as the time when the temple was built. Still, human beings were sacrificed and their blood and flesh consumed by the votaries at nearly all periods of ancient Egyptian history. In later times the sacrifice was symbolic merely, little figures of wood being used instead of living men.

The following account of the battles of Horus is taken from Murray's version of the inscription just mentioned (on the temple at Edfu, in Upper Egypt):

It was in the three hundred and sixty-third year of the reign of the God Ra-Horakhti upon earth that the great war happened between Horus and Set.

The Majesty of the God Ra, whom men call Ra-Horakhti also, was in Nubia with his army, a great and innumerable multitude of soldiers, footmen and horsemen, archers and chariots. He came in his Boat upon the river; the prow of the Boat was of palm-wood, its stern was of acacia-wood, and he landed at Thest-Hor, to the east of the Inner Waters. And to him came Horus of Edfu, he whose name is Harpooner and Hero, seeking for that Wicked One, Set, the murderer of Osiris. Long had he sought, but Set had ever eluded him.

The Majesty of Ra had gathered his forces, for Set had rebelled against him, and Horus was glad at the thought of battle, for he loved an hour of fighting more than a day of rejoicing. He entered into the presence of Thoth, the twice great, god of magic, and Thoth gave him the power to change himself into a great winged disk, a disk that glowed like a ball of fire, with great wings on either side like the colors of the sky at sunset when the blue shades from dark to light, and is shot with gold and flame. Men try to copy these hues when they carve the winged disk above the temple-doors, or make it into a breast-ornament of gold inlaid with turquoise and carnelian and lazuli.

Thus Horus, as a great winged disk, sat on the prow of the Boat of Ra, and his splendor flashed across the waters and fell upon his foes as they lay in ambush. Upon his glorious wings he rose into the air, and against his crafty enemies he made a curse, a curse terrible and fear-striking, saying, "Your eyes shall be blinded, and ye shall not see; and your ears shall be deaf, and ye shall not hear."

And at once, when each man looked at his neighbor, he saw a stranger; and when he heard his own familiar mother-tongue it sounded like a foreign language, and they cried out that they were betrayed, and that the enemy had come among them. They turned their weapons each against the other, and in the quickness of a moment many had ceased to live, and the rest had fled, while over them flew the gleaming Disk watching for Set. But Set was in the marshes of the North Country, and these were but his advance-guard.

Then Horus flew back to Ra, and Ra embraced him and gave him a draught of wine mixed with water. And to this day men pour a libation of wine and water to Horus at this place in remembrance. When Horus had drunk the wine, he spoke to the Majesty of Ra and said, "Come and see thine enemies, how they lie overthrown in their blood." Ra came, and with him came Astarte, Mistress of Horses, driving her furious steeds; and they saw the corpse-strewn field where the army of Set had slain one another.

Now this is the first encounter in the South, but the last great battle was not yet.

Then the associates of Set came together and took counsel, and took upon themselves the likeness of crocodiles and hippopotamuses, for these great beasts can live under water and no human weapon can pierce their hides. They came up the river, the water swirling behind them, and rushed upon the Boat of Ra to overturn it. But Horus had gathered together his band of armorers and weapon-smiths, and they had prepared arrows and spears of metal, smelted and welded, hammered and shaped, with magical words and spells chanted over them. When the fierce beasts came up the river in waves of foam, the Followers of Horus drew their bowstrings and let fly their arrows, they cast their javelins, and charged with their spears. And the metal pierced the hides and reached the hearts, and of these wicked animals six hundred and fifty were slain, and the rest fled.

Now this is the second encounter in the South, but the last great battle was not yet.

Here follows the account of the third and fourth encounters and the destruction of Set's army in the South. Then Horus went to the North and worsted the followers of Set in two fierce battles, "but the last great battle was not yet." The narrative continues:

And now, at last, Set himself came forth from his hiding-place. Fierce and savage he is, cunning and cruel; in his nature like a beast of prey, without ruth or pity; and men make his image with the head of a wild beast, for human feeling is to him unknown. From his hiding-place he came forth, and he roared terribly. The earth and the heavens trembled at the sound of his roaring and at the words which he uttered, for he boasted that he would himself fight against Horus and destroy him as he had destroyed Osiris.

The wind bore the words of his boasting to Ra, and Ra said to Thoth, the twice great, Lord of Magic and Wisdom, "Cause that these high words of the Terrible One be cast down."

Then Horus of Edfu sprang forward and rushed at his enemy, and a great fight raged. Horus cast his weapon and killed many, and his Followers fought also and prevailed. Out of the dust and the noise of the combat came Horus, dragging a prisoner; and the captive's arms were bound behind him, and the staff of Horus was tied across his mouth so that he could make no sound, and the weapon of Horus was at his throat.

Horus dragged him before the Majesty of Ra. And Ra spoke and said to Horus, "Do with him as thou wilt." Then Horus fell upon his enemy, and struck the weapon into his head and into his back, and cut off his head, and dragged the body about by the feet, and at last he cut the body into pieces. Thus did he treat the body of his adversary as Set had treated the body of Osiris. This

took place on the seventh day of the first month of the season when the earth appears after the inundation. And the lake is called the Lake of Fighting to this day.

Now this is the third encounter in the North, but the last great battle was not yet.

Twice more was Set defeated in the South, after an account of which the story goes on as follows:

Now some say that the last great battle is still to come, and that in the end Horus will kill Set, and that Osiris and all the Gods will reign on earth when their enemy is utterly destroyed. But others say that the battle is already ended and that Horus slew the great and wicked Foe who had wrought misery and calamity to all.

And this is what they say: After months and years Horus the Child grew to manhood. Then came Set with his allies, and he challenged Horus in the presence of Ra. And Horus came forth, his Followers with him in their boats, with their armor, and their glittering weapons with handles of worked wood, and their cords, and their spears.

And Isis made golden ornaments for the prow of the boat of Horus, and she laid them in their places with magic words and spells, saying, "Gold is at the prow of thy boat, O Lord of Mesen, Horus, Chieftain of the boat, the great boat of Horus, the boat of rejoicing. May the valor of Ra, the strength of Shu, power and fear be around thee. Thou art victorious, O son of Osiris, son of Isis, for thou fightest for the throne of thy father."

Then Set took upon himself the form of a red hippopotamus, great and mighty, and he came from the South Land with his Allies, traveling to the North Land to meet Horus of Edfu. And at Elephantine, Set stood up and spoke a great curse against Horus of Edfu and against Isis, and said, "Let there come a great wind, even a furious north-wind and a raging tempest;" and the sound of his voice was like thunder in the East of the sky.

His words were cried from the southern heaven and rolled back to the northern heaven, a word and a cry from Set, the enemy of Osiris and the Gods.

At once a storm broke over the boats of Horus and his Followers, the wind roared, and the water was lashed into great waves, and the boats were tossed like straws. But Horus held on his way; and through the darkness of the storm and the foam of the waves gleamed the golden prow like the rays of the sun.

And Horus took upon himself the form of a young man; his height was eight cubits; in his hand he held a harpoon, the blade was four cubits, the shaft twenty cubits, and a chain of sixty cubits was welded to it. Over his head he brandished the weapon as though it were a reed, and he launched it at the great red hippopotamus which stood in the deep waters, ready to destroy Horus and his Followers when the storm should wreck their boats.

And at the first cast the weapon struck deep into the head of the great red hippopotamus and entered the brain. Thus died Set, that great and wicked One, the enemy of Osiris and the Gods.

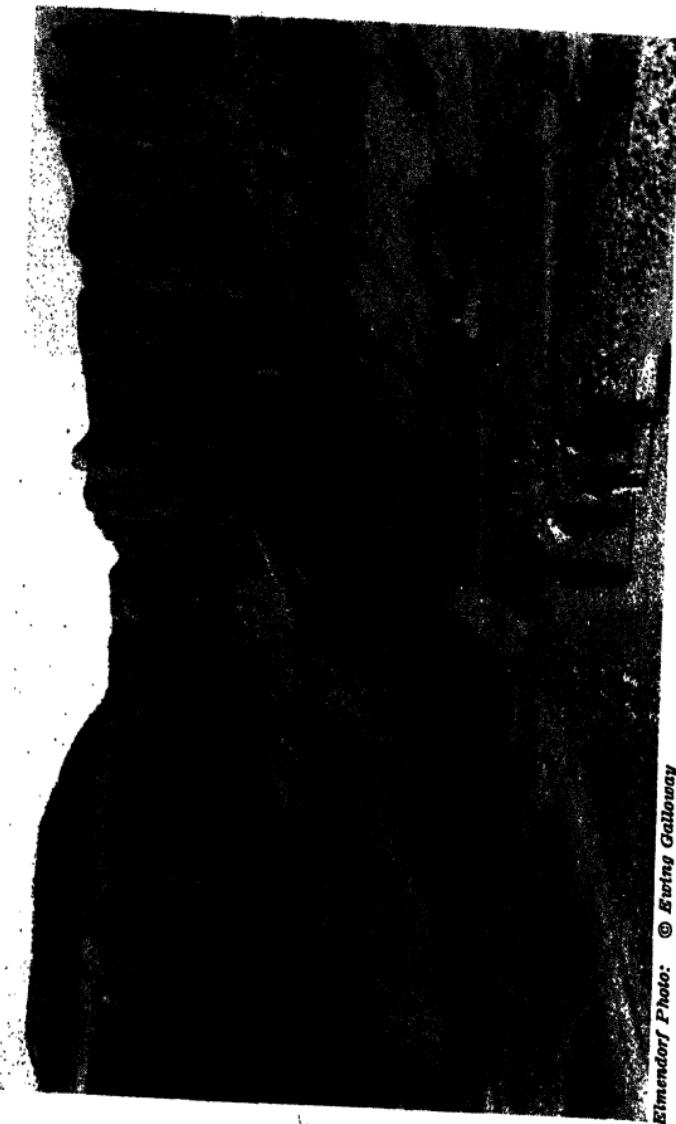
And to this day the priests of Horus of Edfu, and the King's daughters, and the women of Busiris and the women of Pe chant a hymn and strike the drum for Horus in triumph.

And this is their song: "Rejoice, O women of Busiris! Rejoice, O women of Pe! Horus has overthrown his enemies!"

"Exult, dwellers in Edfu! Horus, the great God, Lord of heaven, has smitten the enemy of his father!"

"Eat ye the flesh of the vanquished, drink ye his blood, burn ye his bones in the flame of the fire. Let him be cut in pieces, and let his bones be given to the cats, the fragments of him to the reptiles."

"O Horus, the Striker, the great One of Valor, the Slayer, the Chief of the Gods, the Harpooner, the Hero, the only begotten, Captor of captives, Horus of Edfu, Horus the Avenger!"



Elmendorf Photo: © Ewing Galloway

**TOMB OF QUEEN HATSHEPSUT AT DEIR-EL-BAHRI, THEBES
NEARBY, THE TOMB OF TUT-ANKH-AMEN WITH ITS WONDERFUL TREASURES WAS EXCAVATED IN 1922.**

“He has destroyed the wicked One, he has made a whirlpool with the blood of his enemy, his shaft has made a prey. Behold ye, see ye Horus at the prow of his boat. Like Ra, he shines on the horizon. He is decked in green linen, in binding linen, in fine linen and byssus. The double diadem is upon thy head, the two serpents upon thy brow, O Horus the Avenger !

“Thy harpoon is of metal, the shaft is of the sycamore of the desert, the net is woven by Hathor of the Roses. Thou hast aimed to the right, thou hast cast to the left. We give praise to thee to the height of heaven, for thou hast chained the wickedness of thine enemy. We give praise to thee, we worship thy majesty, O Horus of Edfu, Horus the Avenger !”

IV. “THE Book OF THOTH.” The Greek Hermes and the Latin Mercury were to their respective worshipers what Thoth was to the Egyptians.

Thoth was supposed to have a magic book said to be only two pages long, but of such power that the possessor could accomplish anything he wished. The legend which follows was written in demotic characters on a papyrus found in the grave of a Coptic monk. Demotic writings older than the eighth century B. C. have not been found, and the papyrus in question is supposed to have been written in Ptolemaic times. Evidently this is but one incident in a much longer legend, of the remainder of which we have no knowledge. The following is a version by M. A. Murray:

THE BOOK OF THOTH

Now Ahura was the wife of Nefer-ka-ptah, and their child was Merab; this was the name by which he was

registered by the scribes in the House of Life. And Nefer-ka-ptah, though he was the son of the King, cared for naught on earth but to read the ancient records, written on papyrus in the House of Life or engraved on stone in the temples; all day and every day he studied the writings of the ancestors.

One day he went into the temple to pray to the Gods, but when he saw the inscriptions on the walls he began to read them; and he forgot to pray, he forgot the Gods, he forgot the priests, he forgot all that was around him until he heard laughter behind him. He looked round and a priest stood there, and from him came the laughter.

"Why laughest thou at me?" said Nefer-ka-ptah.

"Because thou readest these worthless writings," answered the priest. "If thou wouldest read writings that are worth the reading I can tell thee where the Book of Thoth lies hidden."

Then Nefer-ka-ptah was eager in his questions, and the priest replied, "Thoth wrote the Book with his own hand, and in it is all the magic in the world. If thou readest the first page, thou wilt enchant the sky, the earth, the abyss, the mountains and the sea; thou wilt understand the language of the birds of the air, and thou wilt know what the creeping things of earth are saying, and thou wilt see the fishes from the darkest depths of the sea. And if thou readest the other page, even though thou wert dead and in the world of ghosts, thou couldst come back to earth in the form thou once hadst. And besides this, thou wilt see the sun shining in the sky with the full moon and the stars, and thou wilt behold the great shapes of the Gods."

Then said Nefer-ka-ptah, "By the life of Pharaoh, that Book shall be mine. Tell me whatsoever it is that thou desirest, and I will do it for thee."

"Provide for my funeral," said the priest. "See that I am buried as a rich man, with priests and mourning women, offerings, libations and incense. Then shall my soul rest in peace in the Fields of Aalu. One hundred pieces of silver must be spent upon my burying."

Then Nefer-ka-ptah sent a fleet messenger to fetch the money, and he paid one hundred pieces of silver into the priest's hands. When the priest had taken the silver, he said to Nefer-ka-ptah :

“The Book is at Koptos in the middle of the river. In the middle of the river is an iron box, In the iron box is a bronze box, In the bronze box is a kete-wood box, In the kete-wood box is an ivory-and-ebony box, In the ivory-and-ebony box is a silver box, In the silver box is a gold box, And in the gold box is the Book of Thoth.

Round about the great iron box are snakes and scorpions and all manner of crawling things, and above all, there is a snake which no man can kill. These are set to guard the Book of Thoth.”

When the priest had finished speaking, Nefer-ka-ptah ran out of the temple, for his joy was so great that he knew not where he was. He ran quickly to find Ahura to tell her about the Book and that he would go to Koptos and find it.

But Ahura was very sorrowful, and said, “Go not on this journey, for trouble and grief await thee in the Southern Land.”

She laid her hand upon Nefer-ka-ptah as though she would hold him back from the sorrow that awaited him. But he would not be restrained, and broke away from her and went to the King, his father.

He told the King all that he had learned, and said, “Give me the royal barge, O my father, that I may go to the Southern Land with my wife Ahura and my son Merab. For the Book of Thoth I must and will have.”

So the King gave orders and the royal barge was prepared, and in it Nefer-ka-ptah, Ahura and Merab sailed up the river to the Southern Land as far as Koptos. When they arrived at Koptos, the high priest and all the priests of Isis of Koptos came down to the river to welcome Nefer-ka-ptah, Ahura and Merab. And they went in a great procession to the temple of the Goddess,

and Nefer-ka-ptah sacrificed an ox and a goose and poured a libation of wine to Isis of Koptos and her son Horus. After this, the priests of Isis and their wives made a great feast for four days in honor of Nefer-ka-ptah and Ahura.

On the morning of the fifth day, Nefer-ka-ptah called to him a priest of Isis, a great magician learned in all the mysteries of the Gods. And together they made a little magic box, like the cabin of a boat, and they made men and a great store of tackle, and put the men and the tackle in the magic cabin. Then they uttered a spell over the cabin, and the men breathed and were alive, and began to use the tackle. And Nefer-ka-ptah sank the magic cabin in the river, saying, "Workmen, workmen! Work for me!" And he filled the royal barge with sand and sailed away alone, while Ahura sat on the bank of the river at Koptos, and watched and waited, for she knew that sorrow must come of this journey to the Southern Land.

The magic men in the magic cabin toiled all night and all day for three nights and three days along the bottom of the river; and when they stopped the royal barge stopped also, and Nefer-ka-ptah knew that he had arrived where the Book lay hidden.

He took the sand out of the royal barge and threw it into the water, and it made a gap in the river, a gap of a schoenus long and a schoenus wide; in the middle of the gap lay the iron box, and beside the box was coiled the great snake that no man can kill, and all around the box on every side to the edge of the walls of water were snakes and scorpions and all manner of crawling things.

Then Nefer-ka-ptah stood up in the royal barge, and across the water he cried to the snakes and scorpions and crawling things; a loud and terrible cry, and the words were words of magic. As soon as his voice was still, the snakes and scorpions and crawling things were still also, for they were enchanted by means of the magical words of Nefer-ka-ptah, and they could not move. Nefer-ka-ptah brought the royal barge to the edge of the gap,

and he walked through the snakes and scorpions and crawling things, and they looked at him, but could not move because of the spell that was on them.

And now Nefer-ka-ptah was face to face with the snake that no man could kill, and it reared itself up ready for battle. Nefer-ka-ptah rushed upon it and cut off its head, and at once the head and body came together, each to each, and the snake that no man could kill was alive again, and ready for the fray. Again Nefer-ka-ptah rushed upon it, and so hard did he strike that the head was flung far from the body, but at once the head and body came together again, each to each, and again the snake that no man could kill was alive and ready to fight. Then Nefer-ka-ptah saw that the snake was immortal and could not be slain, but must be overcome by subtle means. Again he rushed upon it and cut it in two, and very quickly he put sand on each part, so that when the head and body came together there was sand between them and they could not join, and the snake that no man could kill lay helpless before him.

Then Nefer-ka-ptah went to the great box where it stood in the gap in the middle of the river, and the snakes and scorpions and crawling things watched, but they could not stop him.

He opened the iron box and found a bronze box,
He opened the bronze box and found a kete-wood box,
He opened the kete-wood box and found an ivory-and-ebony box,
He opened the ivory-and-ebony box and found a silver box,

He opened the silver box and found a gold box,
He opened the gold box and found the Book of Thoth.
He opened the Book and read a page, and at once he had enchanted the sky, the earth, the abyss, the mountains and the sea, and he understood the language of birds, fish and beasts. He read the second page, and he saw the sun shining in the sky, with the full moon and the stars, and he saw the great shapes of the Gods themselves; and so strong was the magic that the fishes came

up from the darkest depths of the sea. So he knew that what the priest had told him was true.

Then he thought of Ahura waiting for him at Koptos, and he cast a magic spell upon the men that he had made, saying, "Workmen, workmen! Work for me! and take me back to the place from which I came." They toiled day and night till they came to Koptos, and there was Ahura sitting by the river, having eaten nothing and drunk nothing since Nefer-ka-ptah went away. For she sat waiting and watching for the sorrow that was to come upon them.

But when she saw Nefer-ka-ptah returning in the royal barge, her heart was glad and she rejoiced exceedingly. Nefer-ka-ptah came to her and put the Book of Thoth into her hands and bade her read it. When she read the first page, she enchanted the sky, the earth, the abyss, the mountains and the sea, and she understood the language of birds, fish and beasts; and when she read the second page, she saw the sun shining in the sky, with the full moon and the stars, and she saw the great shapes of the Gods themselves; and so strong was the magic that the fishes came up from the darkest depths of the sea.

Nefer-ka-ptah now called for a piece of new papyrus and for a cup of beer; and on the papyrus he wrote all the spells that were in the Book of Thoth. Then he took the cup of beer and washed the papyrus in the beer, so that all the ink was washed off and the papyrus became as though it had never been written on. And Nefer-ka-ptah drank the beer, and at once he knew all the spells that had been written on the papyrus, for this is the method of the great magicians.

Then Nefer-ka-ptah and Ahura went to the temple of Isis and gave offerings to Isis and Horus, and made a great feast, and the next day they went on board the royal barge and sailed joyfully away down the river towards the Northern Land.

But behold, Thoth had discovered the loss of his Book, and Thoth raged like a panther of the South, and he

hastened before Ra and told him all, saying, "Nefer-ka-ptah has found my magic box and opened it, and has stolen my Book, even the Book of Thoth; he slew the guards that surrounded it, and the snake that no man can kill lay helpless before him. Avenge me, O Ra, upon Nefer-ka-ptah, son of the King of Egypt."

The Majesty of Ra answered and said, "Take him and his wife and his child, and do with them as thou wilt." And now the sorrow for which Ahura watched and waited was about to come upon them, for Thoth took with him a Power from Ra to give him his desire upon the stealer of his Book.

As the royal barge sailed smoothly down the river, the little boy Merab ran out from the shade of the awning and leaned over the side, watching the water. And the Power of Ra drew him, so that he fell into the river and was drowned. When he fell, all the sailors on the royal barge and all the people walking on the river-bank raised a great cry, but they could not save him. Nefer-ka-ptah came out of the cabin and read a magical spell over the water, and the body of Merab came to the surface and they brought it on board the royal barge. Then Nefer-ka-ptah read another spell, and so great was its power that the dead child spoke and told Nefer-ka-ptah all that had happened among the Gods, that Thoth was seeking vengeance, and that Ra had granted him his desire upon the stealer of his Book.

Nefer-ka-ptah gave command, and the royal barge returned to Koptos, that Merab might be buried there with the honor due to the son of a prince. When the funeral ceremonies were over the royal barge sailed down the river towards the Northern Land. A joyful journey was it no longer, for Merab was dead, and Ahura's heart was heavy on account of the sorrow that was still to come, for the vengeance of Thoth was not yet fulfilled.

They reached the place where Merab had fallen into the water, and Ahura came out from under the shade of the awning, and she leaned over the side of the barge, and the Power of Ra drew her so that she fell into the

river and was drowned. When she fell, all the sailors in the royal barge and all the people walking on the river-bank raised a great cry, but they could not save her. Nefer-ka-ptah came out of the cabin and read a magical spell over the water, and the body of Ahura came to the surface, and they brought it on board the royal barge. Then Nefer-ka-ptah read another spell, and so great was its power that the dead woman spoke and told Nefer-ka-ptah all that had happened among the Gods, that Thoth was still seeking vengeance, and that Ra had granted him his desire upon the stealer of his Book.

Nefer-ka-ptah gave command and the royal barge returned to Koptos, that Ahura might be buried there with the honor due to the daughter of a king. When the funeral ceremonies were over, the royal barge sailed down the river towards the Northern Land. A sorrowful journey was it now, for Ahura and Merab were dead, and the vengeance of Thoth was not yet fulfilled.

They reached the place where Ahura and Merab had fallen into the water, and Nefer-ka-ptah felt the Power of Ra drawing him. Though he struggled against it, he knew that it would conquer him. He took a piece of royal linen, fine and strong, and made it into a girdle, and with it he bound the Book of Thoth firmly to his breast, for he was resolved that Thoth should never have his Book again.

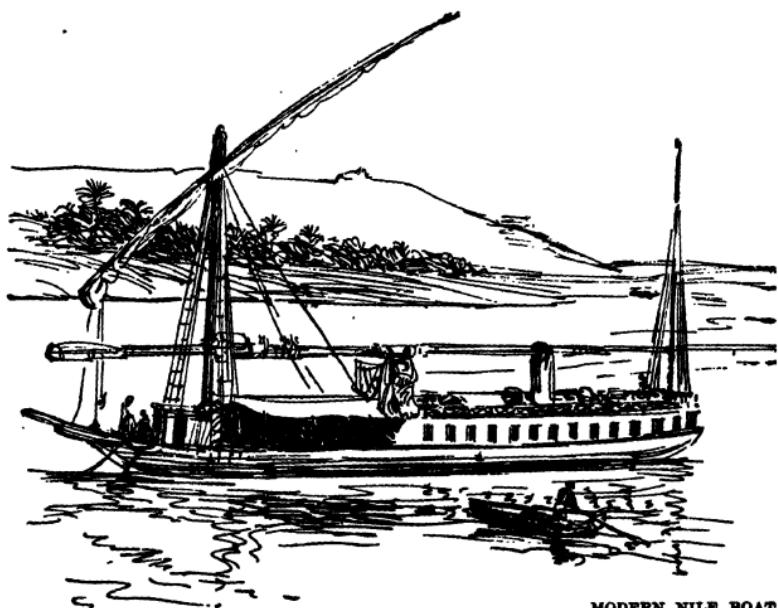
Then the Power drew him yet more strongly, and he came from under the shade of the awning and threw himself into the river and was drowned. When he fell, all the sailors of the royal barge and all the people walking on the river-bank raised a great cry, but they could not save him. And when they looked for his body they could not find it. So the royal barge sailed down the river till they reached the Northern Land and came to Memphis, and the chiefs of the royal barge went to the King and told him all that had happened.

The King put on mourning raiment; he and his courtiers, the high priest and all the priests of Memphis, the King's army and the King's household, were clothed in

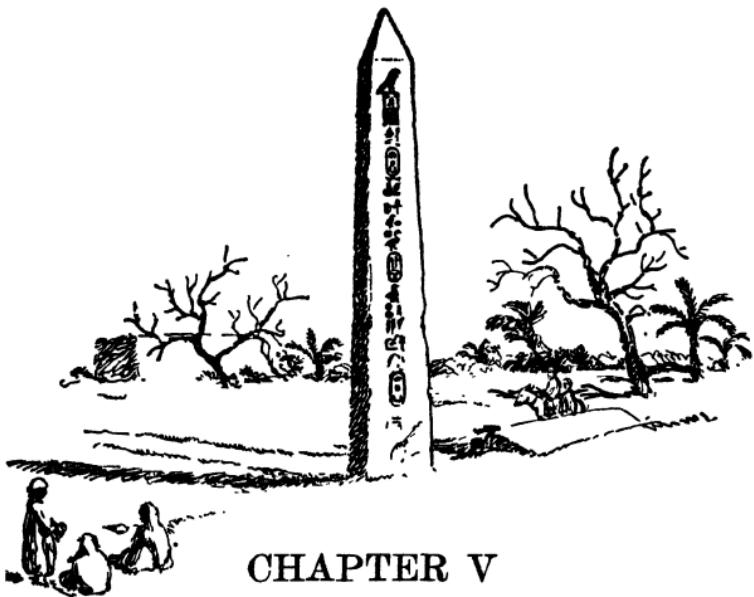
mourning apparel, and they walked in procession to the haven of Memphis to the royal barge. When they came to the haven, they saw the body of Nefer-ka-ptah floating in the water beside the barge, close to the great steering-oars. And this marvel came to pass because of the magical powers of Nefer-ka-ptah; even in death he was a great magician by reason of the spells he had washed off the papyrus and drunk in the beer.

Then they drew him out of the water, and they saw the Book of Thoth bound to his breast with the girdle of royal linen. And the King gave command that they should bury Nefer-ka-ptah with the honor due to the son of a king, and that the Book of Thoth should be buried with him.

Thus was the vengeance of Thoth fulfilled, but the Book remained with Nefer-ka-ptah.



MODERN NILE BOAT



CHAPTER V

FICTION AND POETRY

HUMOR. The Egyptians were lovers of fun, which took with them largely the form of satire and caricature. Even the king himself did not escape satirical poems which ridiculed him and the rest of humanity, often by means of fables, in which beasts converse as men. Aside from these writings there were also many amusing tales with laughable plots.

II. SHORT STORIES. Many short stories have been found, including such as the tale of the Book of Thoth given in the preceding chapter. It must be confessed that the tale is well constructed, interesting and dramatic. Professional tellers of tales were popular personages, and were often to be found in the public places of ancient Egypt as they are to-day in the East.

A famous collection of short stories is that of the *Papyrus Westcar*, now in Berlin. It gives us the earliest example of a number of persons gathered together for a specific purpose, wherein each tells a tale for the amusement of the others. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, the latter by our own Longfellow, are collections built on this plan.

In the papyrus in question King Cheops is represented as a sufferer from sleeplessness, who as a last resort calls upon his sons to entertain him with stories. Each in turn, the princes tell a tale of magic. One relates how a famous magician made a small wax crocodile which became of monstrous size when thrown into the water. Emerging therefrom, it skillfully caught and devoured the lover of the magician's faithless wife and thus paid its debt to its creator.

In another tale a lady of the court loses a valuable jewel in a lake, but a considerate magician dries up the lake, finds and returns the jewel and then graciously returns the waters to their former bed.

Coming nearer home, one of the princes tells of a magician then living, and King Cheops summons the man to court. After displaying his powers to the satisfaction of the King he predicts that soon a certain woman will give birth to three children by the god Ra, children who will form a new dynasty in Egypt. The papyrus is imperfect, and breaks off the tale

after a description of the birth of the three children.

In the introduction to the most excellent translation of the *Arabian Nights*, Mr. Lane claims that the tales are of ancient origin and that the life they exhibit so remarkably was the life of Egypt and of the Arabs in Egypt. No matter where the tale is laid, be it China, India or Persia, the style of life is Egyptian, and the tales, no matter where they originated, have been remodeled to suit Egyptian manners and customs of the time of the Mem books.

III. THE "TALE OF THE TWO BROTHERS."

The papyrus containing the *Tale of the Two Brothers* is well preserved, and gives us the story complete. The two brothers live happily together for a number of years, but their harmony is disturbed by an untoward incident. The wife of the elder falls in love with the younger brother and tempts him. The virtuous younger brother repels her advances and drives her to anger. In revenge, the false wife accuses her brother-in-law to her husband, and the husband, believing the woman, attempts to kill his brother, who flees to a solitary place and begins a life of retirement. The gods take pity on his loneliness and fashion for him a surpassingly-beautiful woman to be his wife. But a lock of her hair, falling into the river, is carried to the King of Egypt, who becomes enamored of the woman and sends an expedition after her. Faithless as the other, this woman readily permits herself to be carried



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MURAL PAINTING ON THE TOMB OF QUEEN NEFETERE
NEAR THEBES

SHOWING IN A WONDERFULLY CLEAR WAY WHAT WOMEN'S FASHIONS
WERE IN THE DAYS OF THE PHARAOHS.

off. Her true husband, the younger brother, is slain, but miraculously restored to life. After a series of wonderful adventures, hair-breadth escapes and supernatural incidents, the deserted husband himself becomes King of Egypt, and takes his revenge.

IV. “THE FATED PRINCE.” Another fragment of a papyrus gives us a part of an interesting story which has been translated under the above title. At the birth of a certain prince it is predicted that he will die by the bite of a dog, a serpent or a crocodile. His anxious father brings him up under the most watchful care in a castle, inaccessible to any of those animals. When he has become a man, however, the prince declines to be longer immured in the castle, or to be longer watched and tended. So he sets out to seek his fortune. He is successful in a number of adventures and marries a charming princess, who saves him from the bite of a serpent. Then in another exciting encounter his faithful dog saves him from a crocodile. The remainder of the manuscript is lost, and we are left to wonder if he really lost his life by the bite of that faithful dog. The plot of the story reminds us of the folklore of many another nation.

V. “THE STORY OF SINUHE” AND “THE ELOQUENT PEASANT.” The stories we have mentioned are all simple and direct in style and depend for their interest upon the working out of the plot. Two others may be mentioned as different types, in which the interest is slight

in the plot, which seems to give merely an opportunity for the writer to indulge in rhetorical flourishes and an exceedingly ornate style. Tales of this kind seem to belong to the middle period of ancient Egyptian history, after which public taste reverted to stories of magic and adventure, such as the tale of the mariner who was cast away on an island and met with a series of experiences not unlike those of Sinbad in the *Arabian Nights*, or the story of General Tahuti, who introduced his soldiers into the beleaguered Joppa by putting them in sacks of grain; the ruse was abundantly successful.

The Story of Sinuhe is on a papyrus now in Leipsic. Sinuhe is an Egyptian of high rank, who becomes so embroiled in political intrigues in Egypt that he is obliged to flee. He takes refuge with the Syrian Bedouins, where after numerous adventures, among which is included the vanquishment in personal combat of a doughty Bedouin champion, he rises to high position among his adopted people. When old age comes on, however, he yearns for his early friends, and successfully seeks pardon from the king of Egypt. Returning to the scene of his early triumphs, he is restored to his former rank and power.

The Eloquent Peasant is the tale of a farmer who is robbed of an ass and its burden and goes to the official of his district for redress. The judge is so struck by the eloquent pleas of the peasant that he reports the case to the king,

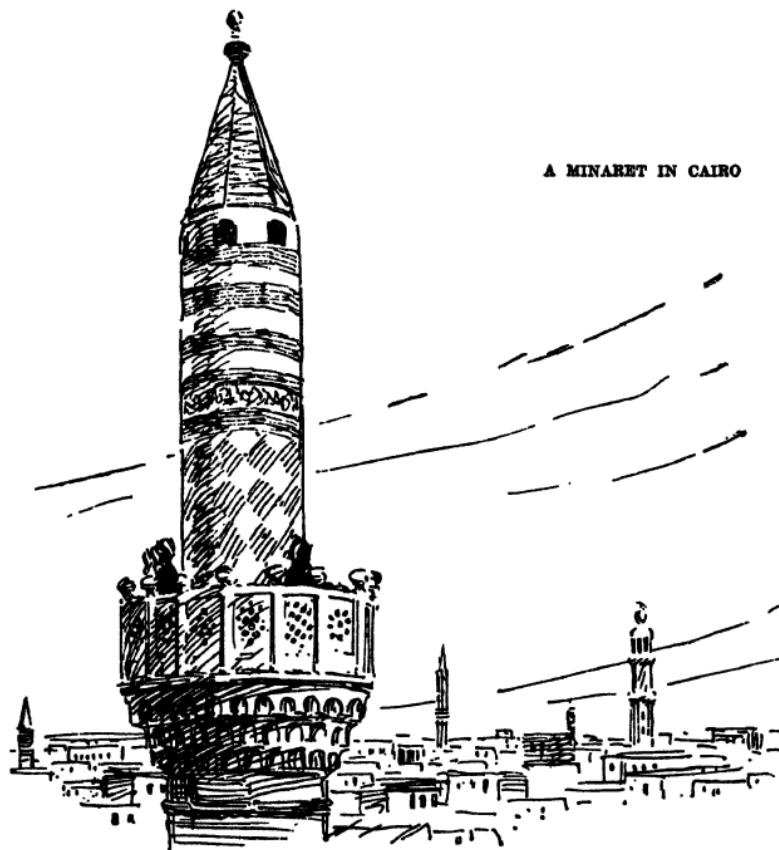
who, in turn is so delighted with the peasant's rhetoric that the case is continued from term to term; the poetic speeches of the pleader are reported and read regularly to the king. It is evident that the plot is but a device for giving some writer the opportunity to charm his readers with fine words.

VI. POETRY. Egyptian poetry is not of a superior kind. In its parallelisms and in other respects it resembles the poetry of the Hebrews, but is much inferior to it. Only one epic poem has thus far been found, and that is a celebration of the heroic deeds of Rameses II in his conquest of the Hittites. There is unity in the narrative, and its antiquity demands respect, but the king talks in unending boastfulness of his superhuman deeds, and the story drags discouragingly, in spite of some fine passages. The manuscript, which is in the British Museum, has been attributed to Pentaur and is sometimes called the *Epic of Pentaur*, but it is known that he was merely the copyist of this "Egyptian Iliad."

A second epic which some enthusiasts have unwisely called the "Odyssey of the Egyptians" is the history of Mohna, in which name some Egyptologists see the Moses of the Bible. Mohna, who was an important official, traveled extensively in Syria and Palestine, and the epic gives his adventures.

We have spoken of the hymns and given translations of some which show greater power than anything accomplished in the narrative

form. Other lyrics are known, and some love songs are graceful and spirited, but none of them shows very deep feeling.





CHAPTER VI

CHRONOLOGY

IN considering dates in Egypt's history, the reader must be guarded in accepting those prior to the conquest by Cambyses as anything more than an approximation, and must remember that authorities differ as widely in dates as they do in the spelling of proper names:

4000 b. c. to 2500 b. c. (approximately) — The Memphite Period.

2950 b. c. — *Precepts of Kegemni* (Reign of Heuni, Third Dynasty).

2900 b. c. (about) — Probable date of earliest existing literary remains, but the system must have had its origin forty or more centuries before.

2900 b. c. (about) — Cheops lived.

2800 b. c. — Fragmentary records, later gathered into the *Book of the Dead*, date as far back as this.

2700 B. C.—*Precepts of Ptah Hotep* (Reign of Isesi, Fifth Dynasty).

2500 B. C. to 1100 B. C. (about)—The Theban Period.

2000 B. C. to 1970 B. C.—King Amenemhat I. *The Instruction of Amenemhat.*

1800 B. C. to 1575 B. C. (about)—The Hyksos sway, covering possibly the arrival of Joseph and the settlement by the Israelites.

1500 B. C.—Hypothetical date of the Israelitish Exodus.

1440 B. C. to 1270 B. C.—Nineteenth Dynasty, beginning with Seti I.

1340 B. C. to 1273 B. C.—Reign of Rameses II.

1100 B. C. to 332 B. C. (about)—The Saite Period.

663 B. C. to 525 B. C.—Twenty-sixth Dynasty. *Book of the Dead* put in canonical form.

525 B. C.—Egypt conquered by Cambyses.

332 B. C.—Egypt conquered by Alexander the Great.

325 B. C.—Probable date of papyrus, *The Lament of Isis and Nephthys*.

300 B. C.—The demotic *Book of Thoth* probably was written near this date.

100 B. C. (about)—Sculptures at Edfu, giving account of Horus worship.

Second Century A. D.—Plutarch's account of Osiris worship.

THE NEAR EAST



CHAPTER I

BABYLONIA AND ASSYRIA

INTRODUCTORY. In modern times the region lying in the valley of the Tigris-Euphrates river system was until 1918 in the hands of the Turks, but from the earliest historic times it was the seat of powerful native kingdoms. The southern part of the tract included between the rivers was ancient Sumer; north of that, but between the

same rivers, was the home of the Babylonians. This whole region was covered by rich alluvial soil that produced abundant crops and supported a dense population. The ancient Assyrians lived farther north and a little west, on the Tigris River, lying south from the eastern end of the Black Sea. East of Assyria lay ancient Media, south of which to the Persian Gulf was ancient Persia.

The original inhabitants of the lower river valleys were a non-Semitic race, who are known as Sumerians, while the Babylonians were a Semitic people. In later Greek times the terms *Chaldean* and *Babylonian* are used interchangeably, because the people have the same origin, and in effect Chaldea was a province of Babylonia. The Assyrians, too, were Semites who overran Babylonia in the thirteenth century before Christ.

Briefly sketched, the history of this region is as follows:

1. The Sumerians held sway over lower Babylonia with varying fortunes for more than a thousand years, from 3000 b. c. and earlier until 2000 b. c., when they were overcome by the Babylonians.

2. The Assyrians invaded Babylonia and conquered it in 1270 b. c. Among their most famous rulers are:

Tiglath-Pileser I, who came to the throne about 1120 b. c. and in various conquests extended the rule of the Assyrians to the Mediterranean Sea.

Assur-nazir-pal III, who ruled about two centuries later and was a great conqueror and builder of temples and palaces.

Shalmaneser II (858–825 B. C.), who was a worthy son who carried the Assyrian arms still further westward.

Tiglath-Pileser IV (745–727 B. C.), who restored the kingdom to its former power and conquered Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine.

Sargon (722–705 B. C.), who captured Samaria and carried the Ten Tribes of Israel into captivity east of the Tigris.

Sennacherib, his son and successor, who defeated Hezekiah, King of Judah, in 701 B. C., but lost his army in that country the next year; who in Assyria made vast canals and aqueducts and added to the splendor of his capital, Nineveh; and who destroyed the revolted city of Babylon.

Esarhaddon, son and successor, who ravaged Egypt and penetrated Central Arabia.

Assur-bani-pal (668–625 B. C.), who was the last great king of the Assyrians and who is more generally known by his Greek name, *Sardanapalus*.

3. The Assyrian Empire was overthrown and the new Babylonian kingdom established under Nabopolassar in 625 B. C.

4. Nineveh was captured and burned by Cyaxares the Mede in 606 B. C.

5. *Nebuchadnezzar* was the most powerful of the later Babylonian rulers. He overran Syria, captured Jerusalem and carried the

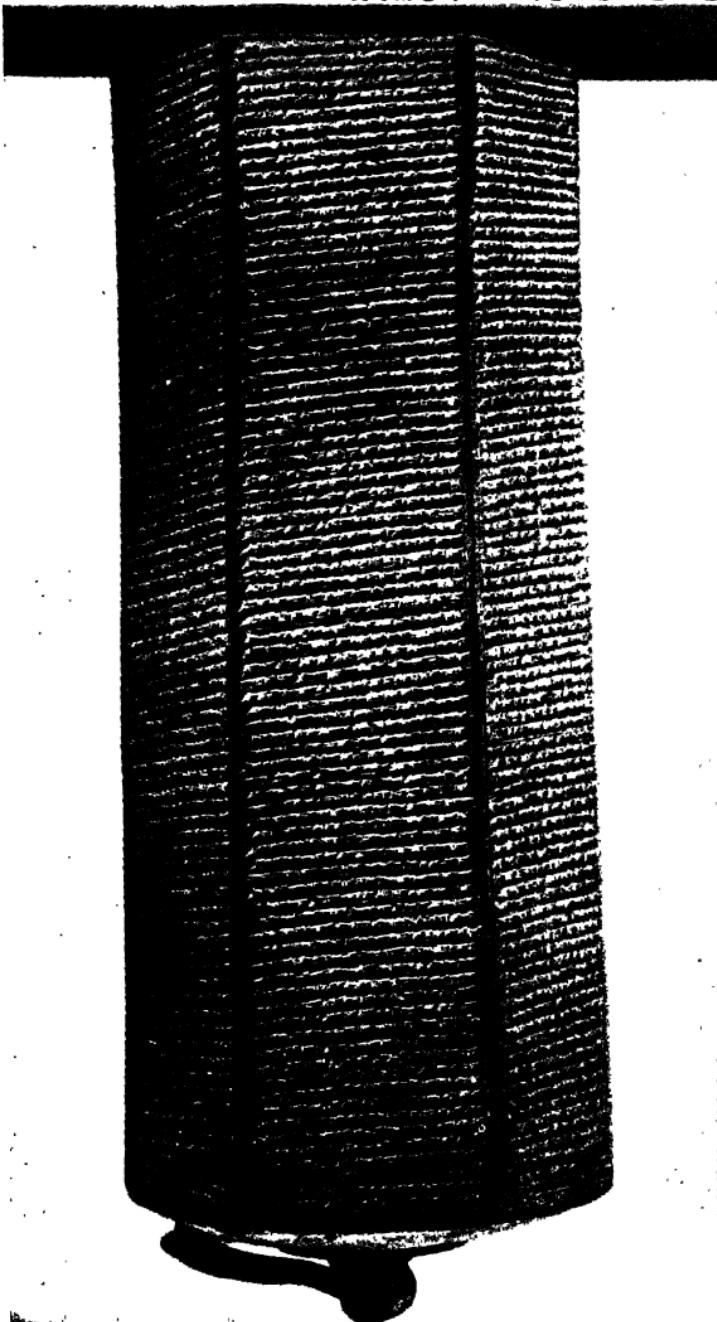
Jewish king and nobles and their families into captivity. He enlarged Babylon and made it the most magnificent city of ancient times before his death in 562 b. c.

6. *Cyrus the Great* captured Babylon and extinguished Babylonian rule in 538 b. c. Belshazzar was then King jointly with his father, Nabonidas. Cyrus represented the united power of the Medes and Persians.

II. CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTIONS. The system of writing called cuneiform originated in the Tigris-Euphrates valley at an extremely early date, probably 6000 years ago, and through the influence of the Babylonians in their conquests came into general use throughout Asia Minor and even penetrated into Egypt. It was written as late as the third century b. c. The Latin word for a wedge is *cuneus*, and because of the wedge-shaped characters in use the system was called *cuneiform*. The latest is the simplest form, and after its characters were understood by modern scholars it was possible to decipher the more complicated forms in use by the Assyrio-Babylonians. Some of the very oldest inscriptions of the early Sumerians indicate that originally the writing was pictorial, as in the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians.

The inscriptions, however, were not carved in stone, as were those of the Egyptians, but were cut into soft clay, which was afterward baked and hardened till it became almost as enduring as stone. Sharp instruments were used for writing, and in the clay straight lines were

ASSYRIAN ACCOUNT OF SENNACHERIB'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST
JERUSALEM AND KING HEZEKIAH OF JUDAH, 701 B.C.
From Terra Cotta Prism, now in British Museum



more easily made than curves. The peculiar arrow-shaped characters were probably made with a single cut of a stylus.

Deciphering the inscriptions which remain was indeed a difficult task, but it was made possible by a discovery similar to that of the Rosetta stone in Egypt. On the face of a cliff on a precipitous mountain near Behistun was a great triple inscription. Its three parts, each four hundred thirteen lines long, were supposed to contain the same facts in three different languages, and after long study they were found to be nearly word for word the same and to recount events in the reign of Darius I. With, then, the translation of the same inscription in Assyrio-Babylonian, Old Persian and New Susian, the Assyriologists had the means ultimately of reading those vast collections which even yet are being annually increased, while unnumbered thousands may still be buried in the ruins of ancient cities. In the ruins of the palace of Assur-bani-pal were discovered three chambers covered to the depth of a foot with tablets varying in size from an inch to nine inches long. On some of them the inscriptions are so small that they can be read only by the aid of a lens. The king's name is inscribed upon most of them, and the collection evidently constituted his library. Many of them are copies of still older inscriptions and were doubtless preserved as sources of instruction. Some are of a historical nature, and there are tablets of omens and magic, legends, epics,

medical compilations, textbooks, etc., most of which show the dependence of Assyria on Babylonia for her learning.

Clay cylinders, flat tablets, brick-like forms, pillars, walls, flattened rocks and the sides of almost inaccessible cliffs still bear these wonderful inscriptions, while rings, seals, jewels and statuary are marked with names, brief mottoes, dates and astrological data.

III. SCIENCE AND ART. The early Sumerians had some arithmetic and made astronomical observations, which, however, were used in the Tigris-Euphrates regions only for the purposes of the calendar and for astrological predictions. Some of these observations are known to have been made as early as the twenty-third century before the Christian era.

The Sumerians built vast edifices out of brick; they cut, polished and engraved gems and manufactured delicate fabrics. The Babylonians ornamented their palaces by using brick of different colors or by plating them with precious metals. Temples and palaces were both pyramidal in shape, but built in terraces or steps. The walls and "Hanging Gardens" of Babylon, built by Nebuchadnezzar, are counted as one of the "Seven Wonders of the World." The Assyrians built and embellished great palaces and used a grand sculpture. The finest examples of their art consists of representations of animals of the chase, in bas-relief. Giant winged bulls and winged lions, colossal figures of bulls and lions with the

heads of men, but none showing knowledge of drapery or much of human anatomy, are familiar in the pictures of that country. Assyrian sculpture was wholly independent of Babylonian, and different in style. Examples of the latter, dating back to 3000 b. c., consist of crude reliefs, which in later times became more delicate in execution and exact in form. Statues, of men, both standing and seated, friezes, carved utensils, etc., show little of the low-relief which the Assyrians affected almost exclusively.

IV. LITERATURE. Assyria was decidedly the land of warriors and men of deeds, and as we may expect in such cases, literature was not extensively cultivated. The Babylonians were of a more refined and peaceful type, though they vindicated their power as conquerors more than once. Most of the tablets of which we have spoken are of Babylonian origin, or at least the literature inscribed thereon may be attributed to the more facile people.

The hymns to the gods constitute the most interesting of the literary remains, some of which contain striking reminders of the Hebrew Psalms. The oldest inscriptions are omens and magic formulas of an astronomical nature. Two remarkable mythological poems have been preserved entire, viz., *The Deluge* and *The Descent of Istar into Hades*. The former is part of a long epic relating incidents in the life of a hero, into which epic were woven older poems as episodes.

The literature of the Assyrio-Babylonian people was so completely extinct as an influence for so many centuries that it is difficult to trace what effect it had upon succeeding nations. There can be no doubt, however, that it affected the Hebrews and the Greeks, the Persians, Hindus and Egyptians, though how extensively in each case we shall never fully know. As scholars become better acquainted with the vast treasures yet to be translated, more definite information may be obtained.

V. HAMMURABI. The founding of the first Babylonian Empire is credited to Hammurabi, who lived about 2250 b. c. An "empire" in those days was a collection of conquered kingdoms held together more or less closely, according to the strength and wisdom of the ruler. In 1902 was discovered the longest cuneiform inscription yet found, which proved to be a copy of a code consisting of two hundred eighty laws enacted by Hammurabi about twenty-five centuries ago. It opens with an enumeration of the King's titles, a statement of his installation by the gods and the choice of Babylon as his capital. There are also references to the public works he inaugurated and to many events of the period.

The code is introduced further by the statement: "Laws and justice I established in the land, and caused the people to prosper."

The laws were based upon personal responsibility and on belief in the sanctity of an oath. Written evidence was required in legal mat-

ters; judgments of the court were delivered under seal; agents were directed to give receipts for money and goods entrusted to them; the estate of a person might be entrusted to others for management, but must not be sold or mortgaged; land must be cultivated, or the owners must pay the same tax as those who did cultivate their land; the interest on a loan need not be paid if crops were destroyed by storm; irrigation ditches and canals were to be carefully guarded, and stringent rules were laid down for the payment of damage caused by them. But it is not necessary to say more to indicate what a remarkable document this is, and how strange its preservation.

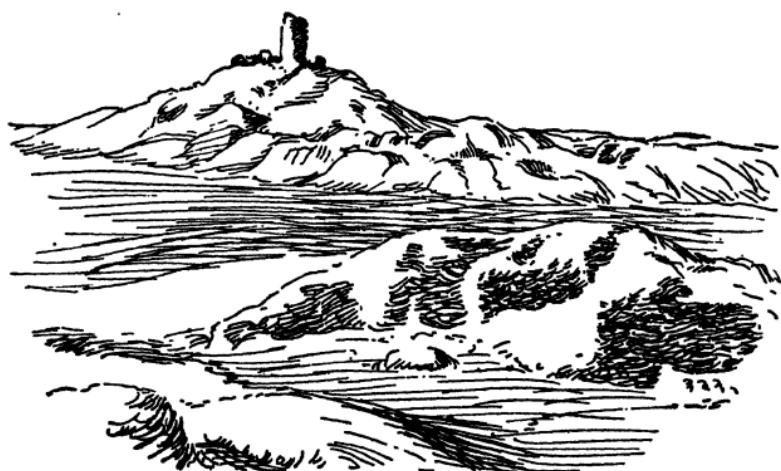
VI. THE DELUGE. The Babylonian account of the Deluge is the earliest and the most important outside of the Bible. A later form of this account is from the writings of Berosus (about 350 b. c.), quoted by Josephus and others. It relates that the Babylonian King Xisuthrus was commanded to take his family and friends and with a pilot enter a vessel and steer "toward the gods," and that when the waters had subsided he sent out three birds, grounded on a mountain, descended from his ship, made sacrifices to the gods and was received into heaven. The account mentioned in the fourth section of this chapter as part of the Gilgmanish epic was discovered in 1872 by George Smith in the "library" of Assur-bani-pal, but it is merely a copy of a much earlier tablet, of which some fragments have been

found. It says in substance that the gods Anu, Bel, Ninib and Ennugi threatened to send out a flood to destroy all the inhabitants of the earth. Ea determined to save Ut-napishtim and advised him to "build a house, to construct a ship" and to take into it with him "seeds of life of all kinds." He built his houseboat, covered it within and without with bitumen and made rooms in it. Taking his family, relatives, laborers, cattle and beasts of the field, he entered and waited for the rain, which came and covered the earth with darkness and with water. Every living thing excepting those in the house with Ut-napishtim was drowned. On the seventh day the waters subsided, the house grounded, and Ut-napishtim sent out a dove, a swallow and a raven. The first two returned, but the last did not. When Ut-napishtim landed from the boat and made his sacrifice the gods "smelled the pleasant odor," Ea lifted up his jewels (rainbow?) in remembrance of the flood, and pacified the other gods, who promised that Ut-napishtim and his descendants should thenceforth be gods and dwell "afar off, at the mouth of the rivers."

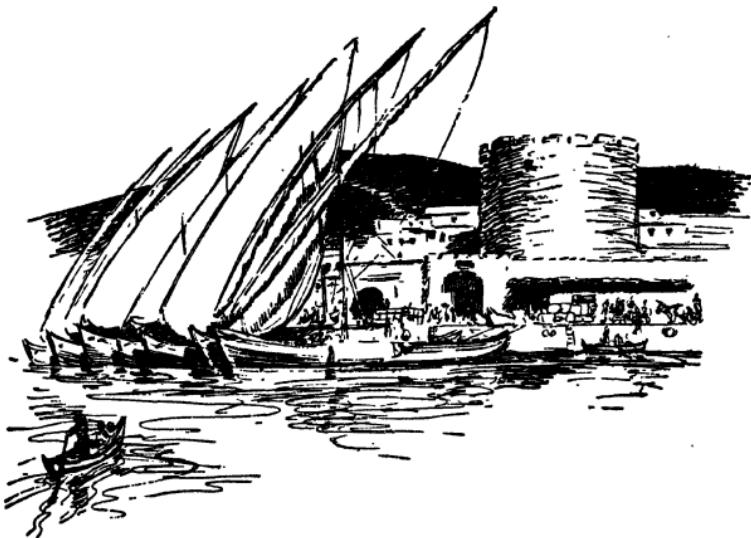
It is interesting to compare the Hebrew account of the Deluge, the story of Deucalion from the Greek, the versions of India, Persia and other nations, including those of the Polynesians, and the American Indians.

VII. ISHTAR. The chief goddess in the religion of the Assyrio-Babylonian peoples was Ishtar. She is recognized as the "great

mother," the mother of humanity, of the earth, of everything. She had a warlike nature, and as the warrior goddess is celebrated by Hammurabi. Her worship, especially in her military character, extended everywhere throughout Assyrian and Babylonian possessions, and in some of its forms was accompanied by obscene and licentious practices, particularly by the priests. In astrology she was recognized as the planet Venus, and came immediately after the sun and moon. She is the queen and mistress of heaven, the one preëminent figure in the pantheon. Under the name Ashtarte, or Astarte, or as spelled in the Old Testament, Ashtoreth, she was worshiped by the Canaanites. Hymns in her praise were numerous, and we have mentioned above the account of her descent into hell, as given in the poem.



MOUNDS ON THE SITE OF ANCIENT BABYLON



CHAPTER II

PHOENICIA

THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE. Ancient Phoenicia was a narrow strip of land of uncertain and changing boundaries, lying for about one hundred fifty miles along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. At no time more than fifteen miles wide on an average, it is in places made even narrower by the Lebanon Mountains, that shut it in from the east. Its principal cities were Tyre and Sidon, the latter having the controlling power until about the ninth century b. c. Tyre then became the leading city, and retained its supremacy until it was destroyed by Alexander the Great in 332 b. c.

The people, who were of Semitic origin, were courageous and wise in their way, and, living shut in from the east, they found a vent

for their activities in maritime commerce; in fact, they became the chief trading nation of antiquity. Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Egypt and Macedonia were all in turn indebted to them for merchant ships and war ships. Phoenician traders found their way to Spain and brought thence the precious metals; they carried on a regular trade with Britain for its tin; they everywhere visited the shores of the Mediterranean and Black seas and even traded with India for ivory and pearls.

To enable them to prosecute their business more successfully, they established colonies or supply depots along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. Cadiz in Spain, Utica and Carthage in Northern Africa and a host of smaller seaports of the Mediterranean and Aegean seas owe their origin and success to this hardy race.

Neither were they without originality, for they made from a certain mollusc the famous dye called "Tyrian purple," and learned to cut and engrave precious stones with much skill and ingenuity.

II. LANGUAGE. The Phoenician language was closely related to Hebrew, and it was through this similarity that the inscriptions of the Phoenicians were translated. Students infer, however, that the latter approached more nearly to the original Canaanite or Moabite speech than to the Hebrew.

As Punic colonies were established, the language spread, and in its diffusion new dia-

lects were formed and new forms of their script appeared.

Our knowledge of the language comes principally from the inscriptions of various kinds which have been found upon coins and seals, some quotations made by Greek and other writers, and proper names in the Old Testament.

Most of the remains have been found in the Punic colonies rather than in Phoenicia proper. Thus, while an inscription of twenty-two lines was found at Sidon in 1855, one of twenty-one lines was found at Marseilles. These are the longest known.

III. ART. In architecture and in most of the other arts the Phoenicians were copyists, taking in their extended travels whatever suited them and using it for their own purposes in their own manner. Their sculptures, however, are found in almost every country along the Mediterranean, showing how interested they were in the art, though they showed so little originality.

Their architecture shows this same spirit of eclecticism even in the scanty remains that are in existence. They had magnificent temples in their large cities, but of these nothing remains; they built defensive walls that for centuries were impregnable, but they have long since fallen into ruins; their harbor constructions were important and well-made, excellently suited to their commerce, but only part of those at Thapsus still exist.

Of sepulchral remains there are some standing specimens, like circular monoliths and rock-hewn tombs. The sarcophagi are finely decorated in high relief, and there are many statues of gods and goddesses.

In metal work they excelled, and some beautiful specimens remain. In glass they were the most skilled workers of antiquity, and while they imitated in making their designs they did wonderful work in cutting and polishing, as has been said.

IV. RELIGION. The Phoenicians, like all the Semites except the Hebrews, were polytheists. Prof. Sayce says: "The supreme God was Baal, 'the Lord,' who revealed himself in the sun. But the forms of Baal were multitudinous. Every city and high place had its Baal, and there were, as well, Bêlit of the mountains and rivers. By the side of Baal stood his female counterpart, Baallis. But the female element in nature was usually adored under the name of Ashtoreth (originally the Babylonian Ishtar) or of Asherah (also of Babylonian origin), who was symbolized by a cone of stone or the stump of a tree. The local Ashtoreth were as numerous as the Baalim. Among the latter must be included such special forms of the deity as Moloch or Melkarth (king of the city), the supreme Baal of Tyre."

As the Phoenicians extended their commercial voyages they found the gods of other nations and accepted them as freely as they did the arts and sciences, until the number of

their gods became illimitable. The worship of Ashtoreth was certainly demoralizing, as was that of Ishtar.

That some at least believed in immortality we may infer from the inscription on the tomb of one of the kings of Sidon, which says that he "looked forward to a life hereafter among the Aephaim, or Shades."

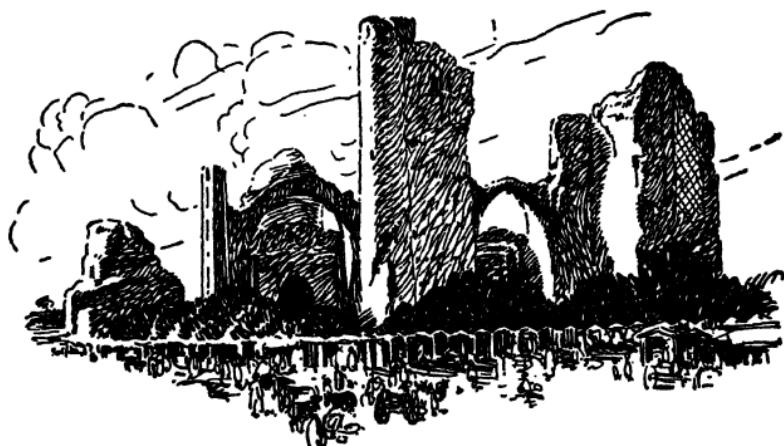
V. THE ALPHABET. The literature of the Phoenicians must have been scanty, indeed. We know of a history of Phoenicia which was said to have been translated into Greek, but critics are now agreed that it was written originally in that language and by a Greek author. There are other annals of fragmentary character. One work, at least, on agriculture was written, but it has entirely disappeared. The remainder of their literature as known to-day consists of the inscriptions mentioned and the countless words engraved on seals and jewels, which, however, are extremely monotonous and of little value.

Strangely enough, however, we do owe a deep literary debt to those ancient Phoenicians, for from them comes indirectly the alphabet as we use it.

All the modern alphabets of Europe are derived from the Greek, directly in the case of Russia, but indirectly through the Latin in other instances. The Greeks took their alphabet from the Phoenicians. The latter used twenty-two characters, of which at least fourteen are almost identical with the earliest

Greek letters, of which there were twenty-two, while the later alphabet contains twenty-four letters, of which sixteen closely resemble the Phoenician. The later Latin alphabet contained twenty-one letters, of which twelve are like the later Greek, and nineteen of these letters are incorporated among our twenty-six. The capital letters A, E, K, M, O and Q are almost Phoenician characters. It is probable that the original Phoenician writing was hieroglyphic, but before the time of which we have any records the arbitrary letters were in use.

We do not know just when the Greeks adopted the Phoenician alphabet, but probably it was not earlier than 1000 b. c. nor later than 800 b. c. By the Greeks it was brought into Italy and by the Roman conquests the forms were established throughout Europe, except in Russia.



RUINED MOSQUE: SAMARKAND



CHAPTER III

SYRIA

INTRODUCTORY. Ancient Syria lay between the Tigris-Euphrates region and the Mediterranean Sea, extending from Egypt on the south to ancient Amanus on the north. It included Palestine and was long a part of Asiatic Turkey, with provincial capitals at Jerusalem, Leisut and four other towns. It is traversed by mountain chains, and its loftiest region is that of the Lebanons. The remarkable depression whose lowest point is marked by the Dead Sea traverses it from north to south and separates the country into two rather narrow tablelands, the one on the east merging into the deserts and the western falling steeply to the Mediterranean. The Jordan River rises near Mount Hermon and flows into the Dead Sea, whose surface is nearly thirteen hundred feet below

sea level. Beirut and Jaffa are now its principal ports.

Egypt brought Syria under her control about 1500 B. C., being strongly opposed by the Hittites, who then occupied the northern part of the country and were encroaching upon the south. About 1000 B. C. the Phoenicians were at the height of their power, the Hebrew kingdom was well established, and the Hittites had been overcome by the Assyrians. In the time of David and Solomon, the Hebrew armies had subdued the Amorites and many of the other tribes that were located in Syria, but to the south the tribes of the Philistines were a powerful confederacy. With the disruption of the Hebrew kingdom, Damascus became powerful as an independent principality, but was conquered by the Assyrians. The later Babylonian Empire held sway only to give way in time to Alexander the Great, after whose death and many years of contention the country fell into the hands of the Seleucidae. In 64 B. C. Syria, including Judea a year later, became a Roman province. In the third century after Christ, Palmyra, a city of the eastern desert, under her famous queen Zenobia, came into prominence, but its career of splendor was brief. For about a hundred years Damascus was the seat of the Caliphs, but about 760 the Caliphate was removed to Bagdad. In 1099 the Crusaders took Jerusalem, but by the end of the next century the Mohammedans were again in power. Near the beginning of the

sixteenth century the Othman Turks established their rule, which existed until overthrown by Allenby for the Allies, in the great World War.

This history, with its strange and thrilling vicissitudes, is properly considered even thus briefly in a work such as this, principally because of its connection with Christianity and the Hebrews and to a lesser degree because of the mass of medieval European literature which relates to the Crusades and which makes constant reference to Syria, its deserts, its heat and its warlike people.

II. LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE. The Aramaic dialect of the Semitic languages was spoken for more than a thousand years in the country whose history we have just given. It is closely related to Hebrew, and many literary remnants are preserved in it. The language is several times mentioned in the Bible, and a number of Aramaic passages occur in it, as for instance, in the book of *Daniel* are about six chapters in Aramaic, beginning with the fourth verse of the second chapter: "Then spake the Chaldeans to the King in Aramaic, 'O King, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.' "

The Hebrews learned Aramaic during their Babylonian exile and used it for some time after their return, but Hebrew retained its position as the written and sacred tongue. By the second century A. D., Aramaic was the only tongue spoken in Palestine.



ASSURBANIPAL HUNTING

A LOW RELIEF, FROM A SLAB FOUND AT NINEVEH, NOW IN BRITISH MUSEUM.

It seems to have been in use as a diplomatic language in early times, for in *II Kings*, xviii, 26, we read, "Then said Eliakim unto Rabshakeh, 'Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it; and talk not to us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that are on the wall.' "

Syriac was the language used by the early Christians, who by the fourth century had generally adopted it as a literary language; a hundred years later it was becoming corrupted by Greek and Hebrew words and phrases, and when the Syrian Church split in the seventh century it began its decline.

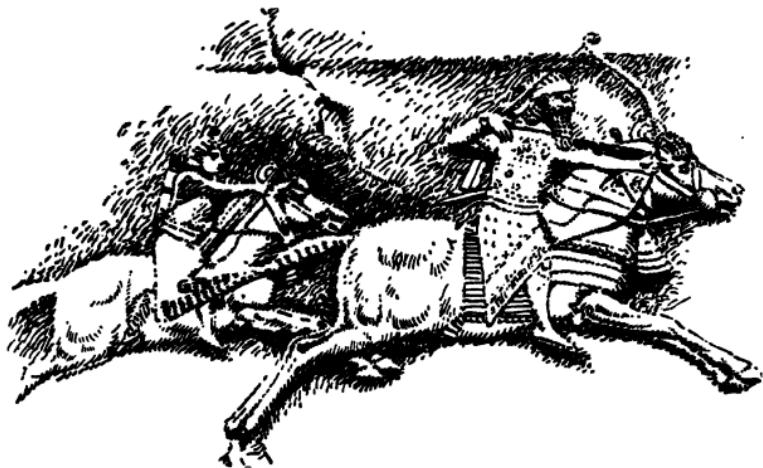
In the thirteenth century an effort was made to revive the language, but it failed. Now it is spoken in a corrupt form in a few of the villages of ancient Syria, and is in use in the rituals of the Nestorian Church, though the priests have little idea of their meaning.

Of the early pagan literature which must have existed in Syria, we have no remains. In fact, the oldest document in the language is a translation of the Old Testament, probably made by the Jews, at what date we cannot be certain, though it may belong to the first century after Christ. Other translations and compilations are known, and the *Peshitto*, or *Syrian Vulgate*, which finally superseded all and is the work of many persons at different times, was completed probably before the third century A. D.

Theological works are numerous and important, and were produced in greatest number from near the beginning of the fifth century to the time of the conquest by the Arabs, to whom Syriac became the principal means of introducing classical knowledge. St. Ephraem, or Ephraem Syrus, who lived about A. D. 250, is perhaps the most noted of the Syrian authors. He wrote commentaries on the Bible, treatises explanatory of religion, and hymns, but the final form to the classical Syriac was given by Jacob of Edessa, in the seventh century.

Among the curious examples of asceticism brought out among the early Syrian Christians was that of those saints who lived upon the narrow top of pillars, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather. One has gained a greater worldly immortality from Tennyson's pen than from his own self-denial. St. Simon Stylites was a Syrian monk who in the early part of the fifth century spent thirty-seven years upon the tops of pillars, the last of which was sixty feet high and only a yard square at the top. His reputation for sanctity was unrivaled, and he had a host of imitators who practiced his austerities, but exceeded their model in suffering. The pillar saints wholly disappeared in the sixteenth century.

Syriac literature was not wholly confined to theological works, but in addition there was an historical literature of numerous but negligible titles, chief among which was the *Chronicles of Edessa*.



CHAPTER IV

CHRONOLOGY

THE chronology of Babylonia, Assyria, Phoenicia and Syria is interesting to readers of this work principally as it serves to link the more highly-developed literatures of neighboring countries and those who overran the famous battleground of the races. In interpreting them, however, due attention must be paid to the fact that there is the same uncertainty attaching itself to the dates as in other old countries, and that not all after which there is no query of doubt can be wholly relied upon. However, they are the dates at present most generally accepted. What future discoveries may establish is, of course, still a matter of doubt.

4000 b. c.—200 b. c.—Probable period of cuneiform inscriptions.

2000 b. c. (about) — *Hammurabi's Code.*
(Discovered, 1902.)

1500 b. c.—Syria under control of Egypt.

1270 b. c.—Assyrians captured Babylonia.

1120 b. c.—Tiglath-Pileser I ascended throne of Assyria.

1000 b. c. (perhaps 800 b. c.)—Greeks adopted Phoenician alphabet.

858 b. c.—825 b. c.—Shalmaneser II (Assyria).

745 b. c.—727 b. c.—Tiglath-Pileser IV (Assyria).

722 b. c.—705 b. c.—Sargon (Assyria) carried Ten Tribes captive.

701 b. c.—Sennacherib defeated in Judea.

668 b. c.—625 b. c.—Assur-bani-pal (Sardanapalus), last great king of Assyria.

625 b. c.—Nabopolassar established new Babylonian kingdom.

562 b. c.—Death of Nebuchadnezzar.

538 b. c.—Babylonian rule extinguished.

350 b. c. (about)—Berosus: Babylonian account of the Deluge.

322 b. c.—Tyre (Phoenicia) destroyed.

64 b. c.—Syria became a Roman province.

Second Century A. D.—Aramaic tongue only spoken in Palestine.

Second Century—Syrian Vulgate completed.

Third Century—Palmyra under Zenobia.

250—St. Ephraem, Syrian writer.

760 (about)—Caliphate removed from Damascus to Bagdad.

1099—Crusaders captured Jerusalem.

HEBREW LITERATURE



HEBREW LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION OF PALESTINE. A glance at the map of what is commonly known as the Near East should prove both interesting and illuminating. It extends from the western projections of the Himalayas on the east to the

Mediterranean and the Sahara Desert on the west, and from the Caspian and Black seas on the north to the Persian and Arabian gulfs and the jungles of Central Africa on the south. Within these comparatively narrow boundaries human history and civilization began. For almost four thousand years we follow the changing fortunes of the nations and peoples within this territory before we are made aware by historic monuments and literary records that there were other peoples outside, struggling equally to express themselves and fit themselves into the scheme of human life and progress.

Here were born, flourished and died the great empires of antiquity—Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, the Hittite kingdom, Persia, and the later empires of the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, the Parthians and the Saracens. Here, too, sprang into being and spread throughout the world three of the great religions which have contributed mightily to human civilization—Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

This Near East has been the cradle of the Semitic and Hamitic races. Occasionally non-Semitic peoples, such as the Hittites and the Persians, have pushed in and established themselves there temporarily, or even permanently. But in the main this land has belonged to the Semites and Hamites. There these two races grew up and divided into separate, though kindred, nations and peoples, and spread slowly to adjacent and distant parts of the earth.

The Near East is divided geographically into two parts, the larger lying entirely in Asia, and the smaller in Africa. The Mediterranean and Red seas and the almost impassable Syrian Desert separate these two districts, while the Isthmus of Suez, itself entirely desert, and a narrow strip of cultivable country about one hundred miles long and an average of fifty miles broad, lying between the great Syrian Desert on the east and the Mediterranean on the west, constitute the only bridge that joins them. For over six thousand years of human history caravans and armies have passed back and forth over this land bridge from the remotest days of Egyptian civilization to the latest conquest of Palestine by the British (1917). Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Hittite conquerors, Scythian and Seljuk hordes, Persian, Greek, Syrian, Roman, Saracen and Crusader hosts, have swept over this bridge in endless succession, while its sacred soil has reverberated to the martial tramp of the armies of Sennacherib, Alexander, Pompey, Constantine, Omar, Godfrey of Bouillon, Richard the Lion-hearted, Saladin, Napoleon and Allenby. For this little strip of arable land, this eastern half of the bridge between Asia and Africa, is the land of Palestine, rich in sacred memories, the birthplace of Judaism and Christianity, and equally revered by Islam. And for the possession of this little country, precious both because of its religious associations and the importance for military and com-

mercial purposes of its geographical situation, monarchs and hosts and religious enthusiasts have striven again and again, until it has deservedly come to be called "the battle ground of the nations."

II. THE ENTRANCE OF THE HEBREW TRIBES. Into this little land of Palestine there came during the thirteenth and twelfth centuries B. C. new invaders, nomads from out the neighboring desert, attracted by the comparative fertility of the land. A few of these tribes had sojourned in Egypt for a time, but had emerged from there under their great leader, Moses. These nomads were the Hebrews, or, as they called themselves in conversation with one another, the *Bene Israel*, "the sons of Israel," or the Israelites. The name *Hebrews* was applied to them only by strangers, or by themselves in conversation with strangers.

They were a branch of the great Semitic race, and more particularly of the Aramaic group thereof. Therefore they were immediately related to the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites and Syrians, and somewhat more remotely to the Assyrians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Canaanites, Arabs and other ancient and modern Semitic groups.

In Palestine they came into direct contact with the earlier inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, or Emorites, Semites like themselves, and speaking a language closely related to their own, whose ancestors, a thousand years before, had emerged from the desert and for-

cibly established themselves in this land, just as these Hebrew tribes were doing now. The Canaanites were at this time in the main farmers or city dwellers, and had evolved a comparatively advanced civilization.

The Hebrew tribes speedily made themselves masters of the land. In the course of the next two centuries the Canaanites disappeared completely, either exterminated or assimilated by the Israelites through intermarriage. But although the Canaanites were no more, their civilization lived on, and, as so often in history, conquered the conquerors. The majority of the Hebrew tribes quietly exchanged their original nomadic and pastoral life for the agricultural. They learned from the surviving Canaanites the methods and arts of farming, with which they themselves were totally unacquainted. Soon many of their outgrown desert institutions and practices were discarded completely, and eventually they came to live almost precisely as the Canaanites had lived.

The people we speak of variously: from the purely racial and national standpoint we call them Hebrews or Israelites, while from a more pronouncedly religious standpoint we designate them by the term, which later came into common use, *Jews*. But their language we call only Hebrew, and the literature written in that language we know as Hebrew literature. However, while in the narrow, literal sense, the term *Hebrew literature* applies only to writ-

ings in the Hebrew language, in the larger, historical, and therefore truer and more practical sense, it includes other writings as well, composed in various languages, Aramaic, Greek, Latin, Arabic, German and English, the works of Jewish thinkers and teachers, which voice the genius of the Jewish people. For language is but the framework and mechanism of literature; it is the soul within, pulsating with life and knowledge, and struggling to express itself fully and convincingly, and to diffuse its knowledge and its philosophy of existence to the world, that constitutes the real essence of the literature of any people and imparts to it a uniqueness and individuality among the many literatures of the nations of the world. In this sense the writings of Philo, Maimonides, Spinoza and Zangwill, though phrased in Greek, Arabic, medieval Latin and English, respectively, still constitute an important part of Hebrew literature.

For the Hebrew people has revealed a soul and a genius which have contributed mightily to the advancement of civilization. Even as the Greeks and Romans, each through its own peculiar genius, gave to the world respectively philosophy and art, law and government, so the Hebrew people gave to the world the knowledge of the one God and of the ethical law as the foundation principle of religion. Somehow, in a way which we can not comprehend, but the manifestations of which we see repeatedly in its history and literature, the He-

brew mind from the very beginning saw God in all the phenomena of life, and solved all the problems of existence and of man's destiny from the standpoint of the one God as the sole and wise and loving and purposeful Creator of this entire universe. This is the eternal, invariable theme of Jewish thinking, which finds expression again and again in Hebrew literature. A great modern philosopher aptly termed the Hebrew people "God-intoxicated." The expression fits its literature as well; for it is filled and inspired with thoughts of God, is in the truest and loftiest sense religious literature, the literature of a gifted people, religiously minded and inspired, expressing in it its dreams and aspirations for the religious and spiritual salvation of mankind.



THE ENCLOSURE WHERE SOLOMON'S TEMPLE STOOD



CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF THE HEBREW PEOPLE

THE history of the Hebrew people may be conveniently divided into eight distinct periods, each ushered in by events of tremendous significance and marking the beginning of a new and important step in Israel's political and cultural evolution.

I. **THE PRE-NATIONAL PERIOD** (to about 1000 b. c.). This first period covers the history of Israel from the earliest times until the conquest of the Philistines by David. In this period the Hebrew tribes emerged from the desert, forced their way into Palestine and settled there. The Canaanites were conquered or assimilated. In the almost one hundred years of warfare with the powerful Philistines, several of the tribes of Israel were at first overcome. Eventually, however, the Philistines

were subjugated, and became in turn vassals of Israel. During this time and under these varying political fortunes, the Israelitish tribes, originally, in their desert existence, but loosely bound together, gradually exchanged their desert feeling of tribal separateness and antagonism for one of unity and close kinship. This spirit was fostered by the Judges, and reached its climax under David. The original, independent nomad tribes had now become a united people and nation, with a civilization predominantly agricultural.

II. FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE (1000-586 B. C.). No sooner were the Philistines subdued and the nation firmly established than David began to extend his territory beyond the natural confines of Palestine. Eventually all of the land bridge of Western Asia was conquered. This little empire prospered under David's powerful son and successor, Solomon. But with his death, in 932 B. C., discord broke out between the North and the South. The kingdom was divided, never to be reunited. The conquered provinces fell away, and to the north Syria arose, with its capital at Damascus, as the aggressive and powerful rival of Israel. The two little kingdoms, Israel and Judah, sapped their strength in internal dissension and petty warfare with their neighbors. Soon Assyria, the colossus of the East, began to advance westward. One little state after another succumbed before it. At last, in 722 B. C., Samaria, the northern capital, fell

before Sargon, the Assyrian King, and the Northern Kingdom came to an end. In an inscription Sargon records that he carried into captivity 27,290 of the inhabitants of Samaria, and settled them in the eastern provinces of his empire. There they gradually mingled with the native population and thus disappeared. This fact has given rise to the oft-discussed tradition of the "Ten Lost Tribes." Actually, these tribes were never lost. Besides these captives of Sargon, others of the Israelites of the Northern Kingdom sought refuge among their brethren of the South. The vast majority, however, remained in their home land unmolested. Eventually they developed into the Samaritan people.

After the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, the Southern Kingdom managed to maintain its independence for over a century, although during much of this time it was a vassal of Assyria. In 606 b. c., however, Assyria in turn was conquered and superseded by the Neo-Babylonian Empire. In 586 b. c. Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadnezzar, or, more correctly, Nebuchadrezzar, the great Babylonian ruler. Thousands of the people were carried captive to Babylonia. After but little more than four centuries, the existence of the Hebrew people as an independent nation was ended. Very clearly the genius and destiny of Israel did not lie either in the field of military conquest or of political administration.



THE WAILING PLACE OF THE JEWS
ON THE WALL MAY BE SEEN WRITTEN PRAYERS OF PIous PILGRIMS.

III. FROM THE BABYLONIAN EXILE TO THE ROMAN CONQUEST (586 B. C.-A. D. 70). At first the exiles in Babylonia were crushed. As *Psalm cxxxvii*, obviously composed in Babylonia at just this time, puts it:

By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion.
Upon the willows in the midst thereof
We hanged up our harps.
For there they that led us captive asked of us words of
song,
And our tormentors asked of us mirth:
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion.”
How shall we sing the LORD’s song
In a foreign land?
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I remember thee not;
If I set not Jerusalem
Above my chiefest joy.

But it was only for a time. Soon their faith reasserted itself. Now for the first time the Hebrew people enacted that wonderful drama, so oft repeated in their sorrowful history, which, more than aught else, has helped to keep them alive under conditions that would have completely destroyed almost any other people, and has made their continued existence one of the miracles of history. Exiles in a strange and hostile land, they rose speedily from their sufferings and despair and adapted themselves to the life and manners of the Babylonian nation in which they had come to live. Just this

was the sage counsel of the prophet Jeremiah to these exiles (xxix, 5-7) :

Build ye houses, and dwell in them, and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them ; take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters ; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters ; and multiply ye there, and be not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the Lord for it ; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

Just this has been the invariable purpose and practice of the Hebrew people, so far as it was permitted to them, in every country in which, since the downfall of their nation, they have come to dwell.

But while they became useful and worthy citizens of Babylonia, and labored wholeheartedly for the welfare of the state, nevertheless they never forgot their past. Many cherished the hope of returning some time to Palestine, and there reestablishing their state, rebuilding the Temple, and beginning their national life anew. This hope was kept alive by the inspired words and writings of the prophets, seers and poets. And in time this hope seemed realized, when in 538 b. c. Babylon in turn fell before the great Persian conqueror, Cyrus, and an edict was proclaimed permitting the Jews to return to their home land.

Only a small handful, however, availed themselves immediately of this privilege, although later their numbers were augmented by ad-

ditional small bands of returning exiles. The majority of the people preferred to remain in Babylonia, the land of birth and home of the new generation. The exiles who returned and rebuilt the Temple came back, not as they had gone into exile, a nation, but as a religious community and nothing more. Persian governmental policy would not sanction the establishment of independent states within its vast domain, but it did permit a considerable degree of religious freedom and local internal autonomy. And so these exiles returned, no longer the Hebrew people, a national entity, but the Jewish people, or the Jews, a religious group, the followers of the Jewish religion. From this moment the terms Jew and Judaism come into use.

The period that followed was one of blackest darkness, only now and then illumined by a ray of hope and promise. The Persian yoke rested ever more heavily upon the prostrate people. And when the Persian Empire was overthrown by Alexander the Great in 332 B. C., and eleven years later his empire in the East gave way in turn to the rival empires of the Ptolemies in Egypt and the Seleucids in Syria, it was for the Jews merely a change of masters, with their lot, if anything, becoming worse with each change. Between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids Palestine was a bone of contention, and the burden of their ceaseless wars rested most grievously upon the devoted people. One hope alone enabled them to bear their bitter

burden: it was the thought that God was the God of all history, that whatever happened was in accordance with His infinite wisdom and benign purpose; that their trials and sufferings were really sent to prove their faithfulness to God, to punish them for their sins, and to purge their souls of all inclination to evil; and that, when their sufferings should have reached the climax, their doom seemed almost sealed, and the powers of darkness and evil seemed on the point of triumphing completely, God Himself would intervene; He would send His *Messiah*, His "Anointed One"; the forces of evil would be overthrown completely, the Kingdom of God on earth would be established, and a period of universal peace and righteousness, and acknowledgment by all peoples of the Fatherhood of the one God, of the supremacy of His law, and of the brotherhood of man would be inaugurated. This is pictured graphically in one of the most sublime passages in all literature, undoubtedly the product of this period, although ascribed in the Bible to both of the older prophets, *Isaiah* (ii, 2-4) and *Micah* (iv, 1-4):

But in the end of days it shall come to pass,
That the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the top of the mountains,
And it shall be exalted above the hills;
And peoples shall flow unto it.
And many nations shall go and say:
"Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
And to the house of the God of Jacob;
And He will teach us of His ways,

And we will walk in His paths;"
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
And He shall judge between many peoples,
And shall decide concerning mighty nations afar off;
And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning-hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.
But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his
fig-tree;
And none shall make them afraid;
For the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken.

For a moment it seemed that the hopes of the people were realized, when under the heroic Judas Maccabeus and his devoted brothers the Jewish people threw off the Syrian yoke in 164 B. C. and regained their independence. But it was only for a moment. The Maccabean line of rulers degenerated, while Rome became ever more powerful and threatening. In 63 B. C. Pompey the Great seized Jerusalem, and Jewish independence was practically lost. From 37 to 4 B. C. Herod, an Idumean, and therefore not a Hebrew, ruled over Judaea, a creature of the Romans and bitterly hated and antagonized by the Jews. In A. D. 6 Palestine became a Roman province completely, administered by Roman procurators. With each new procurator the lot of the Jewish people became more cruel, until in A. D. 66, outraged and embittered, they rose in rebellion against the oppressors, a rebellion almost the most hopeless, the most heroic and the most tragic the

world has ever known. It was the last despairing struggle of a dying nation. In 70 Jerusalem was captured by Titus; the city was laid in ruins; the Temple was given to the flames; thousands of Jewish youths and maidens were carried away into slavery. The nation, Israel, had perished forever; the complete dispersion of the Jewish people, far from its home land into all the countries of the earth, had begun.

IV. THE LAST YEARS IN PALESTINE (A. D. 70-425). After A. D. 70 the life of the Jews who still remained in Palestine changed completely. Political independence was lost, and the Temple, the center of the religious practice, was destroyed. But one thing remained—the study of the divine Law—by which they regulated their inner life and maintained their unique existence. Shortly before the fall of Jerusalem Rabban Jochanan ben Zakkai, the leading teacher of his age, realizing the inevitable future, had obtained permission from Vespasian, the Roman Emperor, to found a school at Jabne, near the seacoast, where the study of the *Torah*, the “Law,” might be carried on. Other schools were opened after this, and hundreds of devoted scholars and teachers, *Rabbis*, as they were called, gave themselves completely to the study of the Torah. From now on this study of the Torah, in some one of its manifold aspects, was almost the sole occupation of the thinkers, writers and spiritual leaders of the Jewish people.

In 133-135, during the reign of Emperor Hadrian, there was a last despairing attempt to regain political freedom, inspired and led by the heroic Bar Cochba and Rabbi Akiba, the wisest and most influential teacher of his day. But it was in vain. The two leaders and thousands of their devoted followers died as martyrs. By order of Hadrian Jerusalem was made a heap of ruins, and on the site of the Temple a shrine of Venus was erected. The new city was called Aelia Capitolina, in order that the name Jerusalem might be forgotten completely, and Jews were forbidden to set foot within its gates. Under Constantine further edicts were issued against the Jews of Palestine, and the leading Rabbis were banished from the land. Finally, about 425, the schools in Palestine were closed entirely. Since then, and until very recently, but a small handful of Jews have remained in Palestine, eking out a miserable, insignificant existence, the helpless, pitiful victims of whatever power and people were at the moment supreme in the land.

V. JEWS IN BABYLONIA (A. D. 200-1000). But before Palestine was completely closed a haven of refuge had opened in Babylonia. Since the Exile many thousands of Jews had continued to dwell in Babylonia. During all these centuries they had zealously maintained their Hebraic identity and their loyalty to the Jewish religion. Shortly after A. D. 200 several schools devoted to the study of the Law, patterned after the schools of Palestine, were

founded, and many wise Rabbis were developed. When the schools of Palestine were closed and their Rabbis were banished, they sought refuge with their brethren in Babylonia. There one generation of scholars succeeded another, and literary works of great significance were produced. Despite numerous legal restrictions and occasional persecutions the lot of the Jews of Babylonia was comparatively favorable, particularly under the enlightened Abbaside caliphs of Bagdad. But with the declining power of this dynasty the center of world culture shifted to Spain; and with this the center of Jewish life and thought likewise moved westward.

VI. JEWS IN WESTERN EUROPE (A. D. 1000-1492). Long before the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70, Jewish colonists had settled in different localities of Western Europe, chiefly for commercial purposes. For centuries they had led a precarious existence, subject to persecutions and burdensome laws and tax impositions of Visigothic kings and like-minded monarchs. With the advent of the Moors in Spain, however, conditions improved. In the main Jews stood in high regard at the Moorish court, and somewhat similarly, although to a less degree, at the courts of neighboring Christian monarchs. Numerous legal restrictions upon their economic and social life were removed. In time the Moorish kingdom in Spain, and with it the neighboring Christian states, became the cultural center of the world.

To this the Jews were no mean contributors. For this period, with its comparative freedom and broad opportunity for the Jews, was truly the Golden Age of Jewish life and literature, the most prolific from the time of the destruction of the Temple until the present day. Jews now devoted themselves to the study of philosophy and the sciences, to poetry, music and mysticism, and to Biblical studies of the most varied character. Through the translation and exposition by Jewish scholars of Arabic works into European languages Arabic science and philosophy were made accessible to Europeans, and the foundations were laid for the Renaissance, the great revival of learning in Europe.

But barely was this Golden Age inaugurated when the reaction began. The Crusades marked the turning point. The religious enthusiasm of the crusaders and of the masses all too often spent itself in persecution of the helpless and inoffensive Jews. Year by year these persecutions and massacres increased in number and extent. Gradually, too, the courts and governments caught this spirit of intolerance. In 1290 the Jews were expelled from England, and in 1306, 1321 and again and completely in 1394, from France; in 1492 they were expelled from Spain and in 1497 from Portugal, and the brief Golden Age was ended.

VII. THE JEWS OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (1492-1791). Expelled from all the countries of Western Europe, only the little

states of Central Europe and Italy remained open to them. Many of the exiled Jews found refuge in Turkey, recently conquered by the Ottomans; others sought comparative security among the Moors of Northern Africa, while a few drifted back to their ancient home in Palestine. With almost the single exception of enlightened Holland, the states of Central Europe merely tolerated the Jews, and no more. Forced to pay dearly for a scant measure of protection, they were a fertile source of revenue for monarchs and nobles; but none the less they were victims of oft-repeated persecutions and massacres. In the large cities they were forced to dwell in narrow, crowded, unhealthy quarters, frequently shut in by high walls and strong gates. This was the case notably in Venice, Rome, Prague, Vienna and Frankfort. These crowded Jewish quarters were called *Ghettos*, and this period may well be styled the Ghetto period of Jewish history.

VIII. THE MODERN PERIOD (1791 to the present day). The French Revolution began a new epoch in human history. The old principle of the divine right of kings and aristocracy gave way to the principle of brotherhood and equal rights for all men. This principle was naturally applied to the Jews of Western Europe. Almost in a moment the Ghetto walls and Ghetto legal restrictions were removed, and the Jew was admitted to full and free citizenship in the nation in which he dwelt. Speedily he availed himself of these privileges

and opportunities. He ceased his distinctive and separative mode of life, began to think, speak and write in the language of his own country, and to give his best to the knowledge and progress of his nation and of mankind. Particularly in England and Italy, just as here in America, where they were granted the largest measure of equality, Jews became active in every walk of life, among the leading statesmen, writers, artists, thinkers, scientists and economists.

Not that this development has proceeded uninterruptedly. There have been frequent reactions. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries anti-Jewish prejudice has been cherished chiefly by the court and military classes, particularly in Germany and France. In Russia, the last European country to emerge from the darkness of medievalism, the lot of the Jew has been especially bitter. He was forced to dwell in a narrow, overcrowded district, called the Pale, extending along the western and southwestern borders, was forbidden to settle in the large cities, to engage in many occupations and professions, or to attend the higher institutions of learning, except in insignificant numbers. He has been the victim of massacres and persecutions as terrible as those of the Middle Ages. Small wonder, therefore, that many of the Jews of Russia, and some of their brethren of Western Europe and America with them, have begun to dream the dream of a new Zion, a new Jewish state in the land of their

fathers. There seems little prospect of the dream ever being realized completely; but it is quite possible that under British protection Palestine may again become an important center of Jewish life and thought.

Meanwhile, throughout the world, and particularly in America, the clouds of religious intolerance and persecution are slowly breaking, and the Jew is everywhere coming to be recognized as a full and worthy fellow-citizen; and everywhere he is contributing his portion to the knowledge, the progress and the happiness of his country and his fellow-men.



THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM



CHAPTER III

A SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF HEBREW AND JEWISH LITERATURE

THE LANGUAGE. When still living as nomads in the desert, the Hebrew tribes spoke a simple Semitic dialect, suited to their simple and rather monotonous mode of living. But when they entered Palestine and exchanged their desert, pastoral life for the agricultural, they found their old language inadequate to describe all the conditions and ideas of their new existence. Naturally they borrowed from their Canaanite neighbors many expressions suited to their new, advanced agricultural civilization, and thus they greatly enriched their original desert dialect. This language is called *Hebrew*.

Ordinarily by *Hebrew* the language of the Old Testament is meant. However, a small part of the Old Testament, viz., *Daniel* II-VII, about four chapters of *Ezra* and one verse of *Jeremiah*, are written, not in Hebrew, but in Aramaic, a language somewhat akin to Hebrew. After the time of Ezra (458 B. C.) Aramaic gradually superseded Hebrew as the ordinary language of the people, and, in consequence, Hebrew, naturally considerably modified, came to be used almost entirely for literary purposes alone. This late, literary dialect is commonly known as *Rabbinic Hebrew*. It is the language of practically all Hebrew writings outside of the Old Testament.

The Hebrew of the Old Testament belongs to the Semitic group of languages, and is quite similar to Phoenician, Moabite, and the languages of other neighboring and kindred peoples, and the original Hebrew script closely resembled the Phoenician. But after the Babylonian Exile a new style of writing, based upon the Aramaic, displaced the old completely, except in legal documents and upon Maccabean coins. The old system of writing, however, was retained by the Samaritans.

II. LITERATURE. Hebrew prose writing really began during the reign of David, about 1000 B. C. Before this, however, many poems, commemorating important events of Hebrew history, had been composed, and were transmitted orally from generation to generation, until finally put in writing. To this earliest

Hebrew literature belong such poems as Jacob's blessing in *Genesis* XLIX, the song of Deborah in *Judges* v, and the elegy of David over Saul and Jonathan in *II Samuel* i. Originally Hebrew literature, it seems, was quite extensive. But much, including entire books mentioned in the Bible, such as the *Book of the Wars of Jehovah* and the *Book of Jashar*, has been lost. All that has been preserved is found in the Old Testament.

III. PERIODS OF PRODUCTION. The history of this vast Hebrew-Jewish literature, extending over a period of three thousand years, may be conveniently divided into six periods.

First Period. To this period belongs, of course, the entire *Old Testament*, exclusive of the *Apocrypha*. It may be divided into four sub-periods:

1. From the earliest days to the decline of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, about 740 B. C. The literary products of this period were, in addition to the ancient poems mentioned above, the main narrative portions of the *Pentateuch* and of *Joshua*, *Judges* and the books of *Samuel*, the books of *Amos* and *Hosea*, and probably also the *Song of Solomon*.

2. From the decline of the Northern Kingdom to the Babylonian Exile, 586 B. C. In this period were composed certain additional portions of the *Pentateuch*, notably *Deuteronomy*, a large part of *Isaiah* (i-XXXIX), *Jeremiah*, *Micah*, *Nahum*, *Habakkuk*, *Zephaniah*, and probably a few of the *Psalms*.

3. The period of the Babylonian Exile, 586-536 b. c. During this period the following portions of the Bible were written: parts of the Pentateuch, particularly *Leviticus*, parts of *Joshua*, *Judges* and *Samuel*, the books of *Kings*, *Isaiah* XL-LV, *Lamentations*, *Ezekiel*, and some of the *Psalms*. Most of these works were composed by writers living as exiles in Babylonia.

4. From the close of the Babylonian Exile to the Maccabean era, about 165 b. c. The writings of this period are certain remaining portions of the Pentateuch and *Joshua*, *Ruth*, *Isaiah* LVI-LXVI, *Joel*, *Obadiah*, *Jonah*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah*, *Malachi*, the greater number of the *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, *Job*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Esther*, *Daniel*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, and *Chronicles*. One of the books of the Apocrypha, the *Wisdom of Ben Sirach*, or *Ecclesiasticus*, as it is also called, was likewise composed near the close of this period.

Second Period (165 b. c.-A. D. 200). However, not all the works of early Hebrew literature are found in the Bible; there were many other writings which enjoyed considerable authority. In time, however, doubts in regard to them arose, for one reason or another, between the leaders of the different sects in Judaism, as well as probably between the Rabbis and the leaders of early Christianity. Therefore, toward the middle of the second century A. D. the Rabbis felt constrained to decide finally and authoritatively which books

must be regarded as divinely inspired, and therefore sacred, and which books, on the other hand, as of human, profane origin and fallibility. The former, inspired books, they grouped together and appended as a third collection to the two previous collections of sacred writings, the *Law* and the *Prophets*, under the name of *Ketubim*, or, as it is better known from its Greek equivalent, the *Hagiographa*, or "Holy Writings." These three combined collections of sacred writings constitute the *Hebrew Bible*, or the *Old Testament*.

The other books, now regarded as uninspired and unauthoritative, and therefore not included in the *Hagiographa*, were put under the ban, as it were, and the Jewish people were discouraged (if not actually forbidden) from reading them. Therefore these books came to be known by the Greek name *Apocrypha*, the "Hidden Writings," i. e., probably, the books that were hidden or concealed in order not to be read.

Long before this, however, those books which had been written in Hebrew originally had been translated into Greek, for the benefit of the Jews of Alexandria, who spoke Greek and not Hebrew. Other books had been written directly in Greek by these cultured Alexandrian Jews. Despite the decision of the Rabbis of Palestine, these Greek-speaking Jews continued to regard all these books of the *Hagiographa* and the *Apocrypha* as of almost equal sanctity and authority, and to include them all

in their collections of holy writings. This usage was followed by the early Christian Church. Protestantism, however, following the example of Judaism, has rejected the *Apocrypha* as not of equal inspiration and authority with the sacred books of the Old Testament. Therefore Protestant versions of the Bible do not contain the *Apocrypha*. But the Catholic Church, at the Council of Trent, decided to retain most of these books, and they are therefore included in all the Catholic versions of the Bible, as, for example, the Douay translation into English.

The books of the *Apocrypha* are, in their customary order in English translations, *I and II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, the Rest of the Chapters of the Book of Esther, the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Jesus, the Son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, with the Epistle of Jeremiah*, three additions to the Biblical book of *Daniel*, viz., the *Song of the Three Holy Children, the History of Susanna and the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Manasses, I and II Maccabees*. All of these, with the exception of *I and II Esdras* and the *Prayer of Manasses* are held sacred by the Catholic Church, and are found in Catholic versions of the Bible.

But there were many other Jewish writings of the same period of similar origin and nature, which for various reasons were not included in the *Apocrypha*. These books have been preserved in various ways. They are designated by the Greek title *Pseudepigrapha*, or "False"

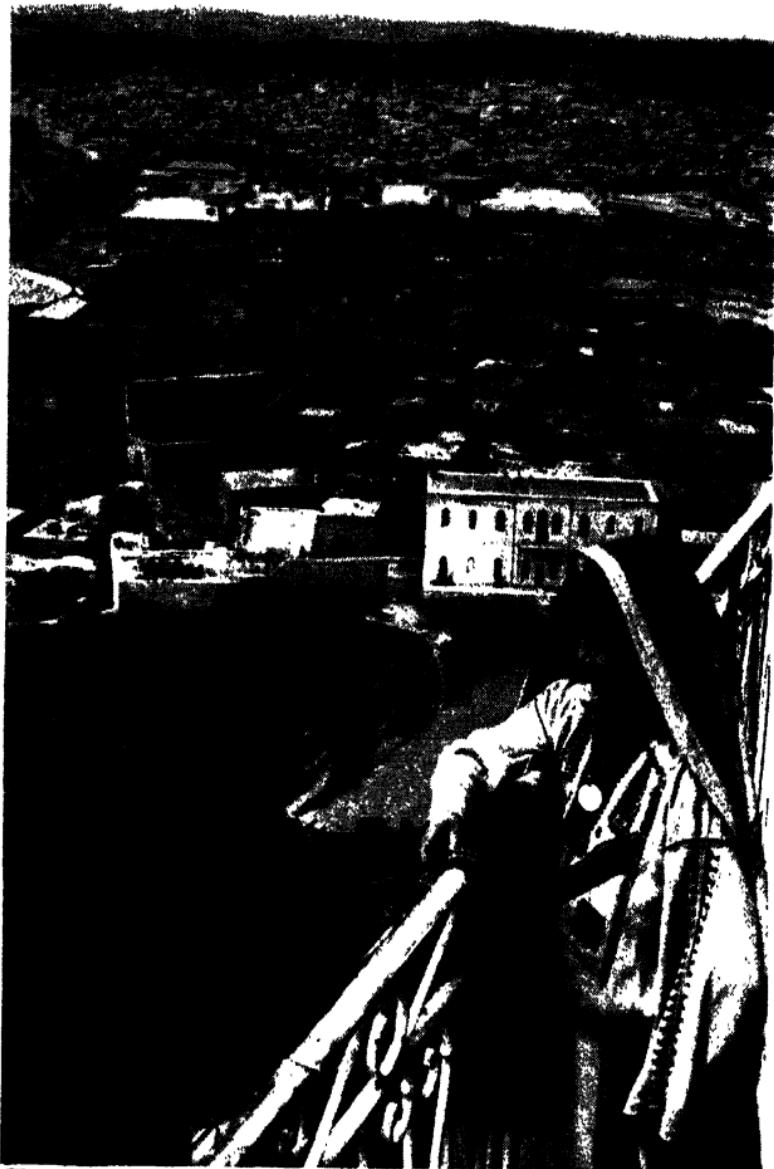
or "Anonymous Writings." To this group belong such works as the *Book of Enoch*, the *Book of Jubilees*, the *Psalms of Solomon*, the *Sibylline Oracles*, the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *Testament of Abraham*, the *Life of Adam and Eve*, and many others.

Inasmuch as Judaism rejected these books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, while early Christianity retained them, they have come down to us, with but a scanty few exceptions, only in their Greek form, since Greek was the established language of the early Christian Church. The original Hebrew of only one of them, viz., the *Wisdom of Ben Sirach*, is known, and that was discovered only recently.

Belonging to this same period are the works of the great Jewish Neo-Platonic philosopher, Philo of Alexandria, who sought to interpret the Bible and the Jewish religion allegorically and from the standpoint of Greek, Neo-Platonic philosophy, and Josephus, the Jewish historian. The latter wrote the history of the Hebrew people from the earliest times to his own day, and in one book in particular treated in detail of the war of the Jews against the Romans, which ended in the destruction of the Jewish nation in A. D. 70. Josephus had been a leader of the Jews in the early stages of this war, and so could speak as an eye-witness. He also wrote a well-known apologetic work, a defense of the Jewish people and religion against the false charges of a hostile Egyptian priest. Both of these scholars wrote in Greek.

Third Period; the Mishna and the Talmud (A. D. 200–1038). In this period there is a complete transfer of religious and literary activity from the Temple, hitherto the center of Jewish life, to the schools, which became, and were destined to remain for over eighteen centuries, the place where Judaism took new root and developed. Even while the Temple still stood, the sway of the aristocratic priestly families, who exercised full control of its ritual, had begun to weaken. About two centuries before the destruction of the Temple the party of the Pharisees began to make its influence felt. The name *Pharisee* has received an undeserved share of obloquy; the general impression is that they were stubborn legalists, unimaginative and unsympathetic, ostentatious in charity and hypocritical in religious life. This view is altogether untrue, as Jewish literature abundantly shows and as modern scientific research amply substantiates. The Pharisees were the men to whom the praises of history are due for having so transformed and strengthened Judaism that it could survive the destruction of its central place of worship, when every other cult and faith, so soon as its temple was destroyed by the irresistible Roman power, became submerged in the universal worship of Jupiter and Venus.

The word *Pharisee* means *separated*. It came into use at the time when the founders of this party took upon themselves the obligation of extra sanctity by separating them-



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JERUSALEM

PANORAMIC VIEW FROM RUSSIAN TOWER.

selves from the mass of the people, who were careless about such religious duties as the giving of tithes and the laws of personal purity. From a group of secluded saints they grew into a powerful anti-aristocratic party. They wrung concessions from the Sadducees, as the priestly party was called. They forced these to accept contributions from the whole people for the maintenance of the daily offering and admit representatives of the people into the Temple service. Thus they made it clear that the Sadducean priests were not at all a superior, holy group, the privileged supervisors of Jewish life and practice, but were merely the representatives of the entire people. They justified these innovations by their conception of the Law. They insisted that Moses had received at Sinai not only the written Law, contained in the Pentateuch, but also an oral Law, which was thereafter handed down by word of mouth, from generation to generation. Practically all of the precepts of this oral Law could, they held, be derived by interpretation from the text of the written Law. It was merely necessary to study the written Law minutely, and to point out the various teachings of the oral Law implied in it.

When the Temple was destroyed in A. D. 70, sacrifices and all Temple ritual ceased forever. Their place was taken by the schools, where the oral Law was taught by Pharisaic teachers. In fact, we can no longer speak of Pharisees, for with the destruction of the Temple the

Sadducean priests ceased to be influential as a party. The Jewish people became wholly Pharisaic, and its religious life consisted of living the Law as expounded by the Rabbis. The first great code of the oral Law was the *Mishna*, a legal and ethical work, which was completed by Rabbi Judah the Patriarch about A. D. 200. The *Mishna* itself became the textbook for further study in the schools of Palestine and Babylonia. This study and commentary upon the *Mishna* was written down, and was called *Gemara* (Completion) or *Talmud* (Teaching). By A. D. 500 two of these *Talmuds* were in existence, the Palestinian, or Jerusalem, *Talmud* and the Babylonian *Talmud*.

The *Talmud* is practically the repository of all Jewish laws, ethics, philosophy, history and folklore of the first five centuries of the present era. It became the center of Jewish studies and the guide of Jewish life and has so continued to the present day. Its chief interpreters were the *Gaonim*, the religious heads of the Jewish community in Babylonia. These *Gaonim* received questions about religious practices from the growing Jewish settlements all over the world, and answered them according to the opinions embodied in the *Talmud*. The last of these *Gaonim* was Hai, who died in 1038.

Fourth Period; the Golden Age of Jewish Literature (1038-1492). It is difficult to sketch briefly the course of Jewish literature beyond this period. From this moment the

history of the Jews differs from that of any other people in that it must be studied simultaneously in various countries under varying conditions. Thus it becomes necessary to proceed not only according to the progress of time, as in all histories, but also to move about geographically, from a barbarous country to one civilized, and from a country where culture thrived under the beneficent sway of peace to lands kept ruggedly barbaric under the stress of ceaseless warfare.

The center of Jewish life and thought now shifted definitely from Babylonia, where the Babylonian Talmud had been written, and where it had been expounded for five hundred years by the Gaonim, to the extreme west of Europe, the Spanish peninsula. From about the tenth century until the Jews were expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492, Spain was the home of Jewish philosophy, of Jewish poetry that rivaled the *Psalms* in beauty, and of Jewish scientific study, which revolutionized the understanding of the Hebrew language and literature and introduced the Jews to the sciences of mathematics, medicine and astronomy. Thus the Jews became, with the Arabs, the custodians of the world's scientific achievements, until the European peoples had become sufficiently cultured to carry on the burden of modern civilization. But with the passing years Spain became increasingly intolerant, while the Arabs were driven farther and farther south. The Holy

Inquisition was established in 1480; and in 1492 the Jews were expelled from Spain, the land in which their culture had reached its zenith.

In the meantime the history of the Jews in England, France and Germany is a monotonous story of persecutions, unfounded charges and expulsions. None of these countries produced the glories of Jewish science and poetry which thrived so splendidly in Moorish Spain. Most of the studies of Jewish scholars outside of Spain were Talmudic.

Fifth Period; the Ghetto Period (1492-1791). As has been said, the history of the Jews during this period was a record of deepest misery and almost ceaseless persecution. Hounded from land to land, or shut up within the cramped and deadening walls of city Ghettos, scarcely a ray of light illumined their darkness. Only Turkey and Holland, of all the countries of Europe, offered the Jews a real refuge, and in these lands they rose to positions of usefulness and honor. In Turkey in the sixteenth century one Jew, Joseph by name, was made Duke of Naxos by the then ruling Sultan, while in Holland Baruch Spinoza, a Jew, became one of the great pioneers of modern philosophy and one of the most illustrious figures in the history of human culture. In the seventeenth century Jews began to migrate to the New World, and in 1654 the first colony of Jews settled in the United States, at New York, while Peter Stuyvesant was governor.

In the same year Jews were readmitted into England under Cromwell.

Slowly the darkness began to give way before the dawn of modern enlightenment and culture. In 1740 Great Britain gave to the Jews in the American colonies full rights of naturalization, and in 1791 the Revolutionary Assembly in France inaugurated a new epoch in Jewish history by granting the Jews full civil and political rights. Medievalism was dead in the world. Slowly, one by one, the civilized nations of Europe accorded complete liberty and equality to the people that had dwelt in their midst for centuries, and had contributed so much toward the cultural progress of Europe.

In this period, with the uncertain political condition of the Jews and with repeated persecutions, it was no wonder that the enthusiastic philosophic and scientific studies of Spain fell into neglect. The place of philosophy was usurped by a peculiar, mystic lore, called *Kabbala* (Tradition). It was a fanciful study, dealing with angels, the Messiah, Paradise and the magical power of numbers and like matters, just the sort of mystic imaginings that would comfort a harassed people by leading their minds away from the world of sad reality into realms of magic fancy. This was also the time of the pseudo-Messiahs; a number of men arose who claimed either that they were the forerunners of the Messiah or the Messiah himself, who had come to redeem Israel from

its misfortunes and bring it back in triumph to the Holy Land. Many poor unfortunates naturally believed in these "deliverers," and their dejection became only deeper when the self-deluded man proved to be but ordinary flesh and blood. The best known of these pseudo-Messiahs was Sabbathai Zevi, who declared himself the Messiah in 1666, the year in which many Jews and Christians fondly expected to witness the advent of the Messianic era.

In addition to this Kabbalistic lore, the Talmud continued to be the main object of Jewish study. Its manifold regulations were codified by Joseph Caro in 1564 in a great work called the *Shulchan Aruk* (*The Set Table*). This work has been since its composition the standard guide of orthodox Jewish life and worship.

Sixth Period; the Modern Era (1791 to the present day). Politically this period represents the complete emancipation of the Jews in Western Europe and the development of the world's conscience to the extent that Russia, Rumania and Poland, the countries which still enforce medieval restrictions upon the Jews, are regarded as semi-barbarous nations. Immigration from Germany, Russia and Rumania built up a large, prosperous and cultured Jewish community in America. Jews have become prominent in politics and science in all lands; witness Disraeli, the Rothschilds, Karl Marx, Ferdinand Lasalle, Ehrlich, Bergson, Einstein and many others.

Jewish literature, too, has enjoyed a new birth. The father of this new Jewish literature was Moses Mendelssohn, the great German philosopher of the eighteenth century. He aimed to make modern literature accessible to his fellow Jews, and, aided by a group of co-workers, he translated the Bible into German, and appended to it a sound, rational commentary. This work was, perhaps, the greatest single stimulus toward the study of modern literature by Jews. In Galicia and in Poland a new Hebrew literature has arisen, and novels, poetry and essays have been written in the sacred tongue. This revival of Hebrew as a spoken and written language has been furthered in recent years by the Zionist movement. What is known as the "Science of Judaism" is also a modern innovation of Jewish life. It is an attempt to apply the critical methods and standards of modern literary and historical science to all ancient Jewish literature and lore, in order to obtain a scientific, historical evaluation of their place and true worth in the history of civilization. In addition to literary efforts in Hebrew or in the study of Hebrew sources, Jews have become prominent in the literatures of all countries, as dramatists, poets, novelists and essayists. Zangwill and Sidney Lee, the Shakespearean scholar in England, Auerbach, the novelist in Germany, and Schnitzler, the dramatist in Austria, are among the foremost modern literateurs, while among the great musicians of Jewish descent

are Felix Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer and Rubinstein.

Thus this little, Semitic people, dwelling upon its own native soil, produced the Bible and the Talmud; in the passing centuries, scattered over Europe, it helped mightily in the preservation and development of the culture of antiquity; and to-day it takes its place as a worthy contributor to all human progress.



CEDARS OF LEBANON



CHAPTER IV

THE OLD TESTAMENT

NAME AND DIVISIONS. That portion of the Bible which alone is considered sacred by the Jewish Church, because it treats of the early history of the Hebrew people and the Jewish religion, and also because it is written in Hebrew, the sacred tongue, or in part in Aramaic, is called the *Old Testament*. This term distinguishes it from that portion of the Bible which recounts the life and works of Jesus and the early history and doctrines of Christianity, and which is regarded as of equal, or even greater sanctity by the Christian Church, and is therefore called the *New Testament*. In many respects the thought, style and method of narration of cer-

tain portions of the New Testament, particularly the *Gospels*, *Acts* and *Revelations*, is strikingly similar to and manifestly dependent upon earlier Hebrew literature and teaching. But inasmuch as almost all of the books of the New Testament were written originally in Greek and not in Hebrew, and the dominant thought and spirit are, of course, Christian, and therefore non-Jewish, the books of the New Testament can hardly be regarded as belonging to Hebrew literature.

The Old Testament is divided into three main divisions, the *Torah*, or "Law," the *Nebiim*, or "Prophets," and the *Ketubim*, or "Holy Writings." The *Torah* is also called the Pentateuch, or the "Five Books of Moses," because of the tradition that these books were written by Moses under divine inspiration. Actually these five books were the work of many writers, living at different periods between 900 and 350 b. c. The books of the *Torah* are *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*.

The second section of the Old Testament, the Prophets, is further broken up into two subdivisions, called the *Former Prophets* and the *Latter Prophets*. The Former Prophets contain only historical books, viz., *Joshua*, *Judges*, *I* and *II Samuel* and *I* and *II Kings*. Christian editions of the Bible also print *Ruth* among the Former Prophets, immediately after *Judges*, but in the Hebrew Bible and in the English translations made directly there-

from *Ruth* is included, and correctly, among the Holy Writings. The Latter Prophets are further subdivided into two groups, the *Major* and the *Minor Prophets*. The books of the Major Prophets are *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*; the books of the Minor Prophets are *Hosea*, *Joel*, *Amos*, *Obadiah*, *Jonah*, *Micah*, *Nahum*, *Habakkuk*, *Zephaniah*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah* and *Malachi*. In the Hebrew Bible these books follow immediately after the Former Prophets and precede the Holy Writings. But in the Christian editions of the Bible they come after the Holy Writings. Moreover, in the Christian editions of the Bible *Lamentations* is inserted immediately after *Jeremiah* because of the tradition that the prophet Jeremiah was the author of this book, and *Daniel* is inserted immediately after *Ezekiel*, as one of the Major Prophets, because it is regarded by the Christian Church as being prophetic in character and predicting the coming of the Messiah. In the Hebrew Bible these books, too, are included, again correctly, in the Holy Writings.

The Holy Writings in the Hebrew Bible consist of *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, *Job*, *Song of Songs*, *Ruth*, *Lamentations*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Esther*, *Daniel*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah* and *I* and *II Chronicles*.

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT A LITERATURE. The Hebrew Bible, or the Old Testament, is in the truest sense, not a book, but a literature. It is not the work of a single writer or a single age, but of many writers living at various times be-

tween 1150 and 165 b. c., or perhaps even slightly later. Moreover, the vast majority of these writers wrote not as individuals voicing their own personal thoughts and teachings, but as the spokesmen of the Hebrew people, expressing the beliefs, ideals, aspirations and sorrows of their nation and uttering a message which sprang out of the life, history and deep experience of the whole people. With the exception of some of the prophets, we know the name of not a single Biblical author. But the spirit and genius that animate all these writings are those of the Hebrew people. And so the Old Testament is truly not a single book, but a collection of books, a national literature; or rather, all that survives of the originally considerable literature of the Hebrew people.

And being a national literature, it is not surprising to find in the Old Testament all types of writing, with probably the single exception of epic poetry, ranging from simple narrative prose to drama. For *Esther* is a drama, although written in narrative prose form, and *Job* has been recognized by scholars as a drama in poetic form, one of the most sublime and soul-stirring masterpieces of the world's literature.

III. EARLIEST HEBREW LITERATURE. As has been said, Hebrew literature began, like most ancient literatures, with heroic poetry, recounting the deeds and glories of the people and its great heroes. For many generations these poems were transmitted orally, until they

were finally committed to writing some time after 1000 B. C. The most characteristic example of this early heroic Hebrew poetry is the stirring song of Deborah in *Judges* v.:

Then sang Deborah and Barak, the son of Abinoam,
on that day, saying:

Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel,
When the people willingly offered themselves.
Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes:
I, even I, will sing unto the Lord;
I will sing praise unto the Lord God of Israel.

Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir,
When thou marchest out of the field of Edom,
The earth trembled and the heavens dropped,
The clouds also dropped water;
The mountains melted from before the Lord,
Even Sinai from before the Lord God of Israel.

In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath,
In the days of Jael, the highways were deserted
And the travelers walked through the by-ways;
The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in
Israel,

Until that I Deborah arose,
That I arose, a mother in Israel.

They chose new gods: then was war in the gates,—
Was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand
in Israel?

My heart is toward the governors of Israel,
Toward them that offered themselves willingly among
the people.

Bless ye the Lord:
Speak, ye that ride on white asses,
Ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.

The delivered from the noise of archers in the water-
ing places,
There shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord,
Even his righteous acts towards the villages of Israel:

Then shall the people of the Lord go down unto the gates.

Awake, awake, Deborah;
 Awake, awake, utter a song.
 Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive,
 Arise, thou son of Abinoam.

The remnants have dominion over the nobles,
 The Lord gave me dominion over the mighty.

Out of Ephraim came they against Amalek,
 After thee, Ephraim, among thy people;
 Out of Machir came down governors;
 Out of Zebulon they that handle the pen of the writer.
 And the princes of Issacher were with Deborah,
 Even Issacher and likewise Barak,
 Barak, sent on foot into the valley.
 In Reuben, divided against itself, was conflict of heart:
 Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds to hear the
 bleating of the flock?

In Reuben, divided against itself, were great searchings
 of heart.

Gilead abode beyond Jordan:—why did Dan remain in
 ships?

Asher continued on the seashore, safe in his havens.
 Zebulon and Naphthali jeopardized their lives unto the
 death in the field.

The kings came and fought;
 Then fought the kings of Canaan by the waters of
 Megiddo.

But they took no spoil;
 War from heaven was made against them;
 The stars in their courses fought against Sisera,
 The river of Kishon swept them away,
 That ancient river, the river of Kishon.

O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.
 Then were the horsehoofs broken by the prancings,
 The prancings of their mighty ones.

“Curse ye Meroz,” said the angels of the Lord,
 “Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof,
 Because they came not to the help of the Lord,

To the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Blessed above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber,
the Kenite, be;

Blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

He asked water and she gave him milk:

She brought forth butter in a lordly dish;

She put her hand to the nail

And her right hand to the workman's hammer;

With the hammer smote she Sisera;

She smote off his head when she had pierced through his
temples.

At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down;

At her feet he bowed, he fell;

Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

The mother of Sisera looked out of the window

And she cried through the lattice,

"Why is his chariot so long in coming?

Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?"

Her wise ladies answered her,

Yea, she returned answer to herself:

"Have they not sped; have they not divided the spoil?

To the head of every man a damsel or two?

To Sisera a prey of divers colors,

A prey of divers colors of needlework,

Of divers colors of needlework on both sides,

Meet for them that take the spoil?"

So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord,

But let them that love thee be as the sun,

As the sun when he goeth forth in his might.

More personal and appealing is the tender lament of David over Saul and Jonathan, in *II Samuel* i, 19-27:

Thy beauty, O Israel, upon thy high places is slain!
How are the mighty fallen!

Tell it not in Gath,

Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon;

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,

Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
Ye mountains of Gilboa,
Let there be no dew nor rain upon you,
Neither fields of choicee fruits ;
For there the shield of the mighty was viley cast away,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.
Saul and Jonathan, the lovely and the pleasant
In their lives, even in their death they were not
divided ;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights,
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle !

Jonathan upon thy high places is slain !
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan ;
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me ;
Wonderful was thy love to me,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished !

Other characteristic examples of this earliest type of Hebrew literature are the song of Lemech, in *Genesis* iv, 23-24; the blessing of Jacob, in *Genesis* XLIX, 3-27; the song of the well, in *Numbers* xxi, 17-18, and also a fragment in vv. 27-30 of the same chapter; the blessings of Bileam, in *Numbers* xxiii, 7-19; xxiv, 3-9; the blessing of Moses, in *Deuteronomy* xxxiii, 2-29, and the song of David, in *II Samuel* xxiii, 1-7. .

IV. PROSE NARRATION. Hebrew prose writing probably began during the reign of David. *II Samuel* viii, 17, states that one of the high officials of David's court was the scribe, whose task it undoubtedly was to record the heroic deeds of the king and the important events of his reign. With advancing culture the number of people able to read became larger, and prose writing therefore more general.

Hebrew prose writing in the Old Testament is, as is to be expected, of various types, and attains a high standard of literary merit. Particularly in simple narration the Biblical writers frequently exhibit artistic powers of surpassing merit. Perhaps the finest example of narrative literature in the Bible, and deservedly regarded as one of the classics of the world's literature, is the story of the sacrifice of Isaac in *Genesis* xxii, particularly in its original, simple form, with the omission of the disturbing and secondary verses 14-18, inserted by some later and less artistic writer. In fourteen short verses the whole story is told, simply and directly, with not a superfluous detail and with fine dramatic effect achieved by the contrasted characters of the old man, grief-stricken and silent, yet undeviating in his exact obedience to God's command, and the little, innocent, unsuspecting boy, with his artless, childish prattle:

And it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him: "Abraham;" and he said: "Here am I." And He said: "Take now thy son,

thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he cleaved the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men: "Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship, and come back to you." And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took in his hand the fire and the knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spoke unto Abraham his father, and said: "My father." And he said: "Here am I, my son." And he said: "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" And Abraham said: "God will provide Himself the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son." So they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built the altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said: "Abraham, Abraham." And he said: "Here am I." And he said: "Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him; for now I know that thou art a God-fearing man, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son. So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.



From Engraving by Gustav Doré

TRIAL OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH

Of almost equal merit are the stories of the Garden of Eden in *Genesis* II, 4; III, 24, the wooing of Rebekkah in *Genesis*, XXIV, and the story of Joseph, in its original, simple form, and particularly the pathetic, gripping climax, where Judah offers himself as a slave in Egypt in place of the lad Benjamin, in *Genesis* XLIV, 18-34. Of particular interest and merit is the story of the bringing up of the ghost of Samuel in *I Samuel* XXVIII, 3-25, for it is one of the earliest ghost-stories in all the world's literature, and possesses all the characteristic tensity and feeling of awe of this class of stories:

Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that divined by a ghost or a familiar spirit out of the land. And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants: "Seek me a woman that divineth by a ghost, that I may go to her, and inquire of her." And his servants said to him: "Behold, there is a woman that divineth by a ghost at En-dor."

And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night; and he said: "Divine unto me, I pray thee, by a ghost, and bring me up whomsoever I shall name unto thee!" And the woman said unto him: "Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that divine by a ghost or a familiar spirit out of the land; wherefore then layest thou a snare for

my life, to cause me to die?" And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying: "As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing." Then said the woman: "Whom shall I bring up unto thee?" And he said: "Bring me up Samuel." And when the woman saw Samuel she cried with a loud voice; and the woman spoke to Saul, saying: "Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul." And the king said unto her: "Be not afraid, but what seest thou?" And the woman said unto Saul: "I see a godlike being coming up out of the earth." And he said unto her: "What form is he of?" And she said: "An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a robe." And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground, and prostrated himself.

And Samuel said to Saul: "Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?" And Saul answered: "I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do." And Samuel said: "Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee? The Lord will deliver Israel also with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me; the Lord will deliver the host of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines."

Then Saul fell straightway his full length upon the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore affrighted, and said unto him: "Behold, thy handmaid hath hearkened unto thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me. Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thy handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way."

But he refused, and said: "I will not eat." But his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed. And the woman had a fatted calf in the house; and she made haste, and killed it; and she took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof; and she brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

V. PARABLE. Perhaps the most distinctive type of Hebrew prose literature is the parable, so many fine examples of which are found in the New Testament and in Rabbinic literature. Numerous examples occur in the Old Testament also, such as the parable of the trees, in *Judges ix, 7-15*, and the somewhat similar parable in *II Kings, xiv, 9*. But the best example of the parable is the one told simply and directly by Nathan the prophet to the powerful and sinning King David (*II Samuel xii, 1-4*):

There were two men in one city: the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and reared; and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

VI. PROVERBS. Closely related to the parable form of literature is the proverb. This, too, is a characteristic type of Semitic litera-

ture in general, but it attains its maximum of force and elegance in the Hebrew. These proverbs are almost invariably written as prose-poetry, a literary form peculiar to Hebrew literature. The distinctive feature of this prose-poetry is that while the form is prose, the verse or sentence is divided into two distinct halves, each of approximately the same length and rhythmical structure, and that, moreover, the second half either repeats in slightly altered form and wording the thought of the first half, in order to give clearness and force thereto, or else attains this same end by presenting just the converse of the thought of the first half. These proverbs reflect the sage, practical counsel of a people rich in experience, that has pondered long over life's many vexing problems, and in wise, balanced maxims gives expression to its philosophy of the best way of living. Such maxims are found in the Bible in the books of *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*. The following examples, characteristic of both the form and the thought of Hebrew proverbs, are taken somewhat at random from these two books:

FROM PROVERBS

Go to the ant, thou sluggard;
Consider her ways, and be wise;
Which having no chief,
Overseer, or ruler,
Provideth her bread in the summer,
And gathereth her food in the harvest.
How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?
When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep—
So shall thy poverty come as a runner,
And thy want as an armed man.

A wise son maketh a glad father;
But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.

Treasures of wickedness profit nothing;
But righteousness delivereth from death.

The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to
famish;
But He thrusteth away the desire of the wicked.

He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand;
But the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

A wise son gathereth in summer;
But a son that doeth shamefully sleepeth in harvest.

The memory of the righteous shall be for a blessing;
But the name of the wicked shall rot.

The lips of the righteous feed many;
But the foolish die for want of understanding.

By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted;
But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

Where no wise direction is, a people falleth;
But in the multitude of counselors there is
safety.

Hope deferred maketh the heart sick;
But desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

A soft answer turneth away wrath;
But a grievous word stirreth up anger.

FROM ECCLESIASTES

A good name is better than precious oil;
 And the day of death than the day of one's birth.
 It is better to go to the house of mourning,
 Than to go to the house of feasting;
 For that is the end of all men,
 And the living will lay it to his heart.
 Vexation is better than laughter;
 For by the sadness of the countenance the heart may be
 gladdened.
 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning;
 But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.
 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise,
 Than for a man to hear the song of fools.
 For as the crackling of thorns under a pot,
 So is the laughter of the fool;
 This also is vanity.
 Surely oppression turneth a wise man into a fool;
 And a gift destroyeth the understanding.
 Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof;
 And the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.
 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry;
 For anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

VII. WISDOM LITERATURE. The proverbs belong to that large class of Hebrew literature which is known as Wisdom Literature. *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes* and *Job* all belong to this class. In many of the finest passages of these books Wisdom is personified as the first creation of God and His co-worker in the building of the universe. Thus Wisdom is represented as speaking (*Proverbs* viii, 22-36) :

The LORD made me as the beginning of His way,
 The first of His works of old.
 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning,
 Or ever the earth was.

When there were no depths, I was brought forth;
When there were no fountains abounding with water.
Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills was I brought forth;
While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields,
Nor the beginning of the dust of the world.
When He established the heavens, I was there;
When He set a circle upon the face of the deep,
When He made firm the skies above,
When the fountains of the deep showed their might,
When He gave to the sea His decree,
That the waters should not transgress His commandment,
When He appointed the foundations of the earth;
Then I was by Him, as a nursling;
And I was daily all delight,
Playing always before Him,
Playing in His habitable earth,
And my delights are with the sons of men.
Now therefore, ye children, hearken unto me;
For happy are they that keep my ways.
Hear instruction, and be wise,
And refuse it not.
Happy is the man that hearkeneth to me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Waiting at the posts of my doors.
For whoso findeth me findeth life,
And obtaineth favor of the LORD.
But he that misseth me wrongeth his own soul;
All they that hate me love death.

And in one of the most sublime passages, not merely of the Old Testament but of all literature, this perfect Wisdom is described thus (*Job xxviii*):

For there is a mine for silver,
And a place for gold which they refine.
Iron is taken out of the dust,
And brass is molten out of the stone.

Man setteth an end to darkness,
And searcheth out to the furthest bound
The stones of thick darkness and of the shadow of death.
He breaketh open a shaft away from where men sojourn;
They are forgotten of the foot that passeth by;
They hang afar from men, they swing to and fro.
As for the earth, out of it cometh bread,
And underneath it is turned up as it were by fire.
The stones thereof are the place of sapphires,
And it hath dust of gold.
That path no bird of prey knoweth,
Neither hath the falcon's eye seen it;
The proud beasts have not trodden it,
Nor hath the lion passed thereby.
He putteth forth his hand upon the flinty rock;
He overturneth the mountains by the roots.
He cutteth out channels among the rocks;
And his eye seeth every precious thing.
He bindeth the streams that they trickle not;
And the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.

But wisdom, where shall it be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
Man knoweth not the price thereof;
Neither is it found in the land of the living.
The deep saith: "It is not in me;"
And the sea saith: "It is not with me."
It can not be gotten for gold,
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.
It can not be valued with the gold of Ophir,
With the precious onyx, or the sapphire.
Gold and glass can not equal it;
Neither shall the exchange thereof be vessels of fine gold;
No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal;
Yea, the price of wisdom is above rubies.
The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it,
Neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

Whence then cometh wisdom?
And where is the place of understanding?

Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living,
And kept close from the fowls of the air.

Destruction and Death say :

“We have heard a rumor thereof with our ears.”

God understandeth the way thereof,

And He knoweth the place thereof.

For He looketh to the ends of the earth,

And seeth under the whole heaven ;

When He maketh a weight for the wind,

And meteth out the waters by measure.

When He made a decree for the rain,

And a way for the storm of thunders ;

Then did He see it and declare it ;

He established it, yea, and searched it out.

And unto man He said :

“Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom ;

And to depart from evil is understanding.”

VIII. LEGALISTIC PROSE. Somewhat similar, both in form and content, to the proverb type of literature is the legalistic type. Here ritual and civil laws and ethical principles are couched in short, simple, direct and forceful sentences, which occasionally exhibit the same parallelism of the two halves of the verse, already noticed in the proverbs. A typical and forceful example of this legalistic prose occurs in *Leviticus xix, 2-18*:

Ye shall be holy ; for I the LORD your God am holy. Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and ye shall keep My sabbaths : I am the LORD your God. Turn ye not unto the idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods : I am the LORD your God.

And when ye offer a sacrifice of peace-offerings unto the LORD, ye shall offer it that ye may be accepted. It shall be eaten the same day ye offer it, and on the mor-

row; and if aught remain until the third day, it shall be burnt with fire. And if it be eaten at all on the third day, it is a vile thing; it shall not be accepted. But every one that eateth it shall bear his iniquity, because he hath profaned the holy thing of the **LORD**; and that soul shall be cut off from his people.

And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corner of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather the fallen fruit of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the **LORD** your God. Ye shall not steal; neither shall ye deal falsely, nor lie one to another. And ye shall not swear by My name falsely, so that thou profane the name of thy God: I am the **LORD**. Thou shalt not oppress thy neighbor, nor rob him; the wages of a hired servant shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind, but thou shalt fear thy God: I am the **LORD**. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor favor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people; neither shalt thou stand idly by the blood of thy neighbor: I am the **LORD**. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the **LORD**.

The Ten Commandments are another characteristic illustration of this kind of writing.

IX. HORTATORY PROSE. Very frequently the laws are reinforced by an appeal to the practical wisdom of the Hebrew people and their loyalty to and faith in God, as basic reasons

for their observance of His divine law. These exhortations are couched in stately, measured, rhythmical language, the dignity and forcefulness of which cannot but impress even in translations. The first eleven chapters of *Deuteronomy* offer splendid illustration of this style of Hebrew writing, and particularly iv, 25-40:

When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have been long in the land, and shall deal corruptly, and make a graven image, even the form of any thing, and shall do that which is evil in the sight of the *LORD* thy God, to provoke Him; I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over the Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. And the *LORD* shall scatter you among the peoples, and ye shall be left few in number among the nations, whither the *LORD* shall lead you away. And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. But from thence ye will seek the *LORD* thy God; and thou shalt find Him, if thou search after Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. In thy distress, when all these things are come upon thee, in the end of days, thou wilt return to the *LORD* thy God, and hearken unto His voice; for the *LORD* thy God is a merciful God; He will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which He swore unto them. For ask now of the days past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from the one end of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God essayed to go and take Him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war,

and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the **LORD** your God did for you in Egypt before thine eyes? Unto thee it was shown, that thou mightest know that the **LORD**, He is God; there is none else beside Him. Out of heaven He made thee to hear His voice, that He might instruct thee; and upon earth He made thee to see His great fire; and thou didst hear His words out of the midst of the fire. And because He loved thy fathers, and chose their seed after them, and brought thee out with His presence, with His great power, out of Egypt, to drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day; know this day, and lay it to thy heart, that the **LORD**, He is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none else. And thou shalt keep His statutes, and His commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the land, which the **LORD** thy God giveth thee, for ever.

X. PROPHETIC PROSE. Strikingly similar in both content and form to hortatory writing are those parts of the prophetic books that are written in prose form. Naturally it is but a short step from this prophetic prose to true Hebrew poetry. One of the noblest examples of this prophetic prose is Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (xxvii, 1-14).

The hand of the **LORD** was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the **LORD**, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold they were very dry.

And he said unto me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"



From Engraving by Gustav Doré

EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

I answered, "O LORD God, thou knowest."

Again he said unto me, "Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, 'O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD God unto these bones, 'Behold I will cause the breath to enter you and ye shall live; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.''"

So I prophesied as I was commanded, and as I prophesied there was a noise; and, behold, a shaking; and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And as I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them.

And he said unto me, "Prophesy unto the wind; prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, 'Thus saith the LORD God, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live."'"

So I prophesied as he had commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up on their feet, an exceeding great army.

Then he said unto me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole of the house of Israel: behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts.' Therefore prophesy and say unto them, 'Thus saith the LORD God, "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put My spirit in you. And ye shall live, and I shall place you on your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it," said the LORD.'"

And again (Jeremiah xxxi, 27-34):

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to

pass, that like as I have watched over them to pluck up and to break down, and to overthrow and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them to build and to plant, saith the **LORD**.

In those days they shall say no more:

“The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children’s teeth are set on edge.”

But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

Behold, the days come, saith the **LORD**, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; forasmuch as they broke My covenant, although I was a lord over them, saith the **LORD**. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the **LORD**, I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying: “Know the **LORD**;” for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the **LORD**; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.

XI. APOCALYPTIC WRITING. One of the most unique types of Hebrew literature is the *Apocalypse*. The name *Apocalypse* comes from the Greek and means *revelation*. These writings deal with the revelation of the profound mysteries of heaven and earth, of God’s government of the universe, of the end of the world, the coming of the Messiah, the establishment of the Kingdom of God, the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment. *Daniel* in the Old Testament and *Revelations*

in the New Testament are the best-known and finest examples of apocalyptic writing, but other parts of the Old Testament, notably *Isaiah* xxiv-xxvii, *Joel* iii-iv, and *Zechariah* xiv are likewise apocalyptic in character. Of this type of Hebrew literature, *Daniel* vii is an illuminating example:

In the first year of Belshazzar, King of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed; then he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spoke and said: I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven broke forth upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings; I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon two feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was said thus unto it: "Arise, devour much flesh." After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the sides of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots; and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld

Till thrones were placed,
And one that was ancient of days did sit:
His raiment was as white snow,

And the hair of his head like pure wool;
His throne was fiery flames,
And the wheels thereof burning fire.
A fiery stream issued
And came forth from before him;
Thousand thousands ministered unto him,
And ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;
The judgment was set,
And the books were opened.

I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke, I beheld even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire. And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

I saw in the night visions,
And, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven
One like unto a son of man,
And he came even to the Ancient of days,
And he was brought near before Him.
And there was given him dominion,
And glory, and a kingdom,
That all the peoples, nations, and languages
Should serve him;
His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall
not pass away,
And his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

As for me Daniel, my spirit was pained in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head affrighted me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things: "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and its nails of brass; which devoured, broke in

pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell; even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke great things, whose appearance was greater than that of its fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High; and the time came, and the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said: "The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise; and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the seasons and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. But the judgment shall sit, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and to be destroyed unto the end. And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them." Here is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my thoughts much affrighted me, and my countenance was changed in me; but I kept the matter in my heart.

XII. PROPHETIC PROSE-POETRY. As has been said, it is but a short step from the noble diction and art of the prose utterances of the prophets to their even more exalted and rapt utterances in poetic form. Therefore it is not at all surprising that many passages of the prophetic books are couched in a combination

of prose and poetry, the former giving the narrative setting of the particular incident, and the latter the prophet's own words, or the words which he feels that God is uttering to or through him. The impressive, dramatic effect of this literary style is readily apparent. A particularly illuminating illustration of this characteristic prophetic style of writing is the oft-cited consecration vision of Isaiah (vi, 1-12) :

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim ; each one had six wings : with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one called unto another, and said :

Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts ;
The whole earth is full of His glory.

And the posts of the door were moved at the voice of them that called, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I :

Woe is me ! for I am undone ;
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips ;
For mine eyes have seen the King,
The LORD of hosts.

Then flew unto me one of the seraphim, with a glowing stone in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar ; and he touched my mouth with it, and said :

Lo, this hath touched thy lips ;
And thine iniquity is taken away,
And thy sin expiated.

And I heard the voice of the LORD, saying :

Whom shall I send,
And who will go for us ?

Then I said : "Here am I ; send me."

And He said: "Go, and tell this people:
 Hear ye indeed, but understand not;
 And see ye indeed, but perceive not.
 Make the heart of this people fat,
 And make their ears heavy,
 And shut their eyes;
 Lest they, seeing with their eyes,
 And hearing with their ears,
 And understanding with their heart,
 Return, and be healed."

Then said I: "Lord, how long?" And He answered:

"Until cities be waste without inhabitant,
 And houses without man,
 And the land become utterly waste,
 And the LORD have removed men far away,
 And the forsaken places be many in the midst of the
 land."

XIII. PROPHETIC POETRY. But it is in true and noble poetry that the inspired soul of the prophet rises to its most exalted heights of emotion, rapture and deepest and most eternal conviction. In the poetic utterances of its great prophets we have the most unique creation of the genius of the Hebrew people and its most distinctive contribution to the world's literature. Innumerable passages from all the prophets might be cited, but the following, taken from the utterances of different prophets, must suffice.

From *Amos* v, 16-24 (about 750 B. C.):

Therefore thus saith the LORD,
 The God of hosts, the Lord:
 Lamentation shall be in all the broad places,
 And they shall say in all the streets: "Alas! alas!"
 And they shall call the husbandman to mourning,

And proclaim lamentation to such as are skillful of wailing.

And in all vineyards shall be lamentation :
For I will pass through the midst of thee,
Saith the **LORD**.

Woe unto you that desire the day of the **LORD** !
Wherefore would ye have the day of the **LORD** ?
It is darkness, and not light.
As if a man did flee from a lion,
And a bear met him ;
And went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall,
And a serpent bit him.
Shall not the day of the **LORD** be darkness, and not light ?
Even very dark, and no brightness in it ?
I hate, I despise your feasts,
And I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Yea, though ye offer me burnt-offerings and your meal-offerings,
I will not accept them ;
Neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts.
Take thou away from Me the noise of thy songs ;
And let Me not hear the melody of thy psalteries.
But let justice well up as waters,
And righteousness as a mighty stream.

From *Hosea v, 15 ; vi, 6* (about 737 B. C.) :

I will go and return to My place,
Till they acknowledge their guilt, and seek My face ;
In their trouble they will seek Me earnestly :
“Come, and let us return unto the **LORD** ;
For He hath torn, and He will heal us,
He hath smitten, and He will bind us up.
After two days will He revive us,
On the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in
His presence.
And let us know, eagerly strive to know the **LORD** ;
His going forth is sure as the morning ;

And He shall come unto us as the rain,
As the latter rain that watereth the earth.”

O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?
O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?
For your goodness is as a morning cloud,
And as the dew that early passeth away.
Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets,
I have slain them by the words of My mouth;
And thy judgment goeth forth as the light.
For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,
And the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings.

From *Isaiah I*, 10-20 (about 701 B. C.):

Hear the word of the **LORD**,
Ye rulers of Sodom;
Give ear unto the law of our **God**,
Ye people of Gomorrah.
To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto
Me?
Saith the **LORD**;
I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams,
And the fat of fed beasts;
And I delight not in the blood
Of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.
When ye come to appear before Me,
Who hath required this at your hand,
To trample My courts?
Bring no more vain oblations;
It is an offering of abomination unto Me;
New moon and sabbath, the holding of convocations—
I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly.
Your new moons and your appointed seasons
My soul hateth;
They are a burden unto Me;
I am weary to bear them.
And when ye spread forth your hands,
I will hide Mine eyes from you;
Yea, when ye make many prayers,

I will not hear;
Your hands are full of blood.
Wash you, make you clean,
Put away the evil of your doings
From before Mine eyes,
Cease to do evil;
Learn to do well;
Seek justice, relieve the oppressed,
Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together,
Saith the LORD;
Though your sins be as scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they be red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.
If ye be willing and obedient,
Ye shall eat the good of the land;
But if ye refuse and rebel,
Ye shall be devoured with the sword;
For the mouth of the LORD hath spoken.

From *Micah* vi, 1-8 (about 690 B. C.):

Hear ye now what the LORD saith:
Arise, contend thou before the mountains,
And let the hills hear thy voice.
Hear, O ye mountains, the LORD's controversy,
And ye enduring rocks, the foundations of the earth;
For the LORD hath a controversy with His people,
And He will plead with Israel.
O My people, what have I done unto thee?
And wherein have I wearied thee?
Testify against Me.
For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,
And redeemed thee out of the house of bondage,
And I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
O My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab
devised,
And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him;

From Shittim unto Gilgal,
 That ye may know the righteous acts of the **LORD**.
 "Wherewith shall I come before the **LORD**,
 And bow myself before God on high?
 Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings,
 With calves of a year old?
 Will the **LORD** be pleased with thousands of rams,
 With ten thousands of rivers of oil?
 Shall I give my first-born for my transgression,
 The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"
 It hath been told thee, O man, what is good,
 And what the **LORD** doth require of thee:
 Only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly
 with thy God.

From *Isaiah* LV (the so-called Deutero-
Isaiah; about 540 B. C.):

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye for water,
 And he that hath no money;
 Come ye, buy, and eat;
 Yea, come, buy wine and milk
 Without money and without price.
 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?
 And your gain for that which satisfieth not?
 Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good,
 And let your soul delight itself in fatness.
 Incline your ear, and come unto Me;
 Hear, and your soul shall live;
 And I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
 Even the sure mercies of David.
 Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples,
 A prince and commander to the peoples.
 Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not,
 And a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee;
 Because of the **LORD** thy God,
 And for the Holy One of Israel, for He hath glorified thee.
 Seek ye the **LORD** while He may be found,
 Call ye upon Him while He is near;

Let the wicked forsake his way,
 And the man of iniquity his thoughts;
 And let him return unto the **LORD**, and He will have com-
 passion upon him,
 And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.
 For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
 Neither are your ways My ways, saith the **LORD**.
 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
 So are My ways higher than your ways,
 And My thoughts than your thoughts.
 For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven,
 And returneth not thither,
 Except it water the earth,
 And make it bring forth and bud,
 And give seed to the sower and bread to the eater;
 So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth:
 It shall not return unto Me void,
 Except it accomplish that which I please,
 And make the thing whereto I sent it prosper.
 For ye shall go out with joy,
 And be led forth with peace;
 The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you
 into singing,
 And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress,
 And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
 And it shall be to the **LORD** for a memorial,
 For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

From *Isaiah* LVIII, 1-7 (the so-called Trito-
 Isaiah; about 450 B. C.):

Cry aloud, spare not,
 Lift up thy voice like a horn,
 And declare unto My people their transgression,
 And to the house of Jacob their sins.
 Yet they seek Me daily,
 And delight to know My ways;
 As a nation that did righteousness,
 And forsook not the ordinance of their God,

They ask of Me righteous ordinances,
They delight to draw near unto God.

“Wherefore have we fasted, and Thou seest not?
Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no
knowledge?”—

Behold, in the day of your fast ye pursue your business,
And exact all your labors.

Behold, ye fast for strife and contention,
And to smite with the fist of wickedness;
Ye fast not this day

So as to make your voice to be heard on high.

Is such the fast that I have chosen?

The day for a man to afflict his soul?

Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush,
And to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?

Wilt thou call this a fast,

And an acceptable day to the LORD?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen?

To loose the fetters of wickedness,

To undo the bands of the yoke,

And to let the oppressed go free,

And that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,

And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy
house?

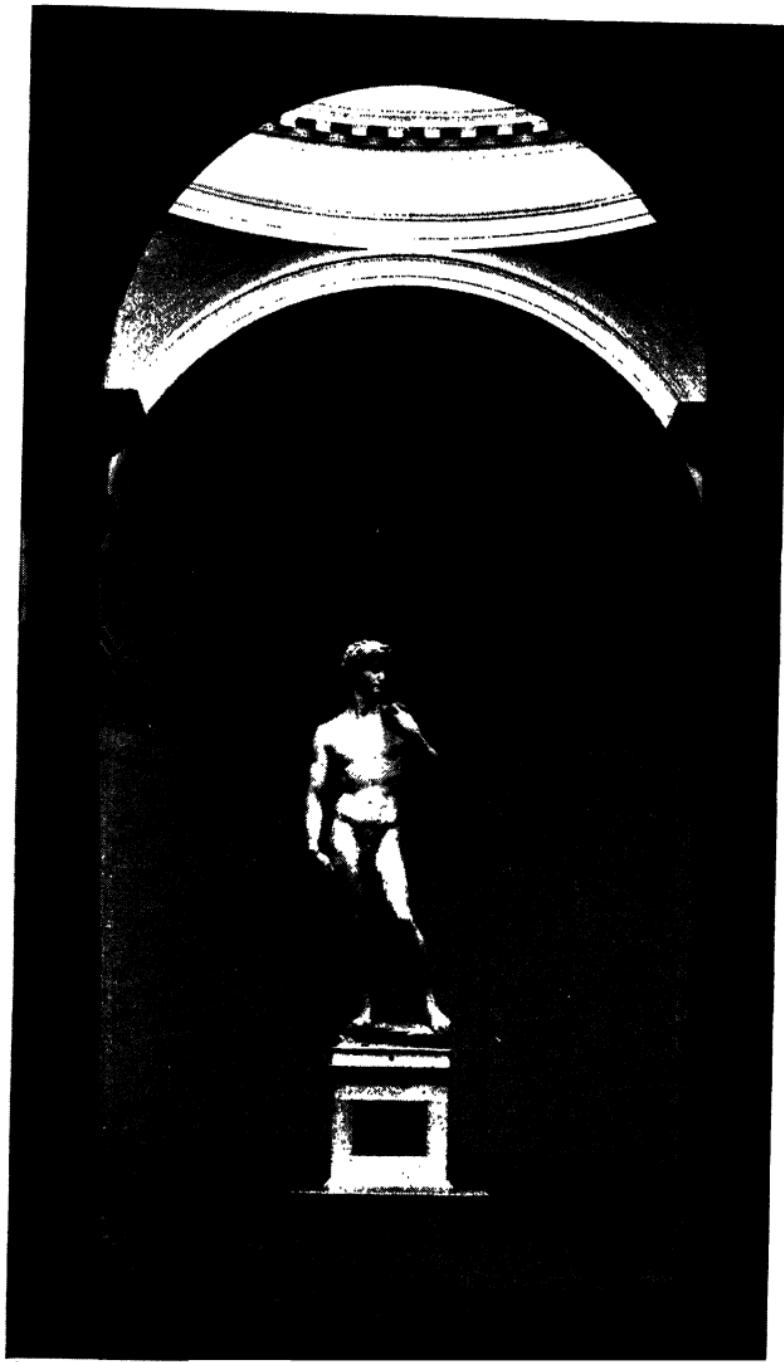
When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him,
And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

XIV. LYRIC POETRY. But it must not be imagined that these prophetic writings are the only poetry of Hebrew literature. The Hebrew language as well as Hebrew thought and the genius of the Hebrew people lend themselves naturally to poetic expression upon a great variety of themes, particularly of a lyric character. Hardly less unique and distinctive of Hebrew poetic literature than the ecstatic

utterances of its great prophets are the inspired words of its writers of sacred lyric poetry, the *Psalms*. These psalms were composed by many writers living at different periods between the time of David, about 1000 B. C., and the Maccabean age, about 100 B. C. They, too, express the outpourings of the soul of the Hebrew people, seeking communion with God and aspiring to sing His praises in words of imperishable truth and beauty. The psalms were undoubtedly chanted to musical accompaniment in the ritual of the Temple at Jerusalem. They have been repeatedly rendered in metrical form in various languages, and have been included among the sacred hymns of many churches. In this way they have probably become better known generally than any other portion of the Old Testament, and have contributed more directly to the development of the religious thought of the world.

Probably the best known of all the psalms, the gem of the entire collection and deservedly a classic of the world's literature, is *Psalm XXIII*:

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul;
He guideth me in straight paths for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
For Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.



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DAVID

STATUE BY MICHELANGELO; SAID TO BE HIS FIRST IMPORTANT WORK.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;
 Thou hast anointed my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
 And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Almost equally well known, and striking a characteristically exalted ethical note, is *Psalm XXIV*:

The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof;
 The world, and they that dwell therein.
 For He hath founded it upon the seas,
 And established it upon the floods.
 Who shall ascend into the mountain of the LORD?
 And who shall stand in His holy place?
 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
 Who hath not taken My name in vain,
 And hath not sworn deceitfully.
 He shall receive a blessing from the LORD,
 And righteousness from the God of his salvation.
 Such is the generation of them that seek after Him,
 That seek Thy face, even Jacob. Selah
 Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
 And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors;
 That the King of glory may come in.
 "Who is the King of glory?"
 "The LORD strong and mighty,
 The LORD mighty in battle."
 Life up your heads, O ye gates,
 Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
 That the King of glory may come in.
 "Who then is the King of glory?"
 "The LORD of hosts;
 He is the King of glory." Selah

Psalm LXXXIV portrays with sympathetic art the exultant joy felt by the pious Jew, going

up to Jerusalem from his country home to celebrate one of the great annual religious festivals in the Temple of Jehovah:

How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!
My soul yearneth, yea, even pineth for the courts of the
LORD;
My heart and my flesh sing for joy unto the living God.
Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow
a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young;
Thine altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King, and my God—.
Happy are they that dwell in Thy house,
They are ever praising Thee. Selah

Happy is the man whose strength is in Thee;
In whose heart are the highways.
Passing through the valley of Baca they make it a place
of springs;
Yea, the early rain clotheth it with blessings.
They go from strength to strength,
Every one of them appeareth before God in Zion.

O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah
Behold, O God our shield,
And look upon the face of Thine anointed.
For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand;
I had rather stand at the threshold of the house of my
God,
Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.
For the LORD God is a sun and a shield;
The LORD giveth grace and glory;
No good thing will He withhold from them that walk up-
rightly.
O LORD of hosts,
Happy is the man that trusteth in Thee.

One of the most beautiful and majestic evaluations of life as measured by the standard of God's infinite wisdom and power, a truly characteristic Jewish standard of measurement, is found in *Psalm xc*:

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.

Thou turnest man to contrition;
And sayest: "Return, ye children of men."

For a thousand years in Thy sight
Are but as yesterday when it is past,
And as a watch in the night.

Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep;

In the morning they are like grass which groweth up.
In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up;
In the evening it is cut down and withereth.

For we are consumed in Thine anger,
And by Thy wrath are we hurried away.

Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee,
Our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance.

For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath;
We bring our years to an end as a tale that is told.

The days of our years are three-score years and ten,
Or even by reason of strength four-score years;

Yet is their pride but travail and vanity;
For it is speedily gone, and we fly away.

Who knoweth the power of Thine anger,
And Thy wrath according to the fear that is due unto Thee?

So teach us to number our days,
That we may get us a heart of wisdom.

Return, O Lord; how long?
And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants.

O satisfy us in the morning with Thy mercy ;
That we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast
afflicted us,
According to the years wherein we have seen evil.
Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants,
And Thy glory upon their children.
And let the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us ;
Establish Thou also upon us the work of our hands ;
Yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.

And finally, one of the most inspiring expressions of perfect faith and trust in God is found in *Psalm cxxi*:

I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains :
From whence shall my help come ?
My help cometh from the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved ;
He that keepeth thee will not slumber.
Behold, He that keepeth Israel
Doth neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper ;
The Lord is the shade upon thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall keep thee from all evil ;
He shall keep thy soul.
The Lord shall guard thy going out and thy coming in,
From this time forth and for ever.

XV. OTHER FORMS OF POETRY. In addition to the lyric poetry of the *Psalms*, Hebrew literature is rich in other well-known forms of poetry. The following is a worthy illustration

of Hebrew didactic poetry (*Proverbs xxxi*, abbreviated):

A woman of valor who can find?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,
And he hath no lack of gain.
She doeth him good and not evil
All the days of her life.

She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

Strength and dignity are her clothing;
And she laugheth at the time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
And the law of kindness is on her tongue.
She looketh well to the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her:
“Many daughters have done valiantly,
But thou excellest them all.”
Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain;
But a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands;
And let her works praise her in the gates.

And inasmuch as the Old Testament is not a book, as has been said, but the national literature of a whole people, a people which has felt, like every other people, hope and despair, happiness and sorrow, love and hate, we need not be startled to find in the Bible, sacred literature though it has come to be, one of the most beautiful and artistic love poems of all the world's literature, deservedly called the *Song of Songs*. And perhaps the most delicious bit

of this charming poem is the tender, appealing second chapter:

I am a rose of Sharon,
A lily of the valleys.

As a lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters;
As an apple-tree among the trees of the wood,
So is my beloved among the sons.
Under its shadow I delighted to sit,
And its fruit was sweet to my taste.

He hath brought me to the banqueting-house,
And his banner over me is love.

“Stay ye me with dainties, refresh me with apples;
For I am love-sick.”

Let his left hand be under my head,
And his right hand embrace me.

“I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye awaken not, nor stir up love,
Until it please.”

Hark! my beloved! behold, he cometh,
Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.
My beloved is like a gazelle or a young hart;
Behold, he standeth behind our wall,
He looketh in through the windows,
He peereth through the lattice.

My beloved spoke, and said unto me:

“Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
For, lo, the winter is past,

The rain is over and gone;

The flowers appear on the earth;

The time of singing is come,

And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;

The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs,

And the vines in blossom give forth their fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the covert
of the cliff,

Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice ;
For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.”
“Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vine-yards ;
For our vineyards are in blossom.”
My beloved is mine, and I am his,
That feedeth among the lilies.
Until the day breathe, and the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a gazelle or a young
hart
Upon the mountains of spices.

And just as the Hebrew people has rejoiced in its love, so, too, it has laid its dear ones to rest in their eternal home, and has sorrowed and mourned and speculated upon the inescapable end of all existence and the vanity of human ambitions and conceits. So we read the lofty, humbling, inspiring words of the ancient sage, known only anonymously as “The Preacher” (*Ecclesiastes* XII, 1-8) :

Remember then thy Creator in the days of thy youth,
Before the evil days come,
And the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say :
“I have no pleasure in them ;”
Before the sun, and the light, and the moon,
And the stars, are darkened,
And the clouds return after the rain ;
In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble,
And the strong men shall bow themselves,
And the grinders cease because they are few,
And those that look out shall be darkened in the windows,
And the doors shall be shut in the street,
When the sound of the grinding is low ;
And one shall start up at the voice of a bird,
And all the daughters of music shall be brought low ;
Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high,

And terrors shall be in the way;
And the almond-tree shall blossom,
And the grasshopper shall drag itself along,
And the caperberry shall fail;
Because man goeth to his long home,
And the mourners go about the streets;
Before the silver cord is snapped asunder,
And the golden bowl is shattered,
And the pitcher is broken at the fountain,
And the wheel falleth shattered into the pit;
And the dust returneth to the earth as it was,
And the spirit returneth unto God who gave it.
Vanity of vanities, saith Koheleth;
All is vanity.

Such in brief is the Hebrew literature of the Old Testament, the literary and artistic product of the genius of a highly gifted people throughout the first one thousand years of its history. But with the closing of the Biblical Canon the genius of the Hebrew people did not die, nor was its soul compelled to silence. So long as a people lives and hopes and dreams and aspires, its genius, too, lives on fresh and ever creative, and its soul breaks forth again and again in exalted writing and inspired song. So we may confidently search for further creations of the Hebrew genius, and trace the literary activity of its thinkers, sages and poets on down through the ages to our own day.



A MARKET PLACE IN THE HOLY LAND



CHAPTER V

THE APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

JUST as the Old Testament, so, too, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha constitute a national literature, or rather, a part thereof—the continuation of the national literature of the Hebrew people, of which the Old Testament was the beginning. No distinct line of demarcation as to content and character can be drawn between many of the books of the Hagiographa and those of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. In general the books of the Hagiographa are older; yet the *Wisdom of Ben Sirach* in the Apocrypha was composed about 200 B. C., a full generation before *Daniel* and some of the *Psalms*, while parts of *Enoch* in the Pseudepigrapha were written less than a generation after *Daniel*, and undoubtedly earlier than

some of the *Psalms*. Clearly, therefore, the Biblical and Apocryphal periods of Hebrew literature overlap somewhat.

Moreover, while many of the books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha were written originally in Greek, chiefly by Greek-speaking Alexandrian Jews, others, like the books of the Old Testament, were written originally in Hebrew, notably the *Wisdom of Ben Sirach*, *I Maccabees*, *Judith*, the *Book of Jubilees*, the *Psalms of Solomon*, and others. The distinction between the Bible and the Apocrypha, or canonical and uncanonical works, was not drawn, as has been said, until about the middle of the second century A. D., that is, until the close of the Apocryphal period. Until then the books of the Hagiographa and at least those books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha which were in Hebrew, had existed alongside of each other, and had enjoyed in many respects almost equal consideration. Therefore the Hebrew literature of the Old Testament passes almost insensibly into that of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. And just as the Old Testament, so too, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha contain manifold forms of literary composition.

The cruel persecutions of the Syrians and the Romans and the constant longing for independence nourished in the hearts of the Hebrew people the undying hope of the speedy coming of the Messiah and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. This called into being

many Apocalyptic works, similar to *Daniel*, that constitute the largest group of Apocryphal writings. To this group belong *Enoch*, *IV Esdras*, the *Apocalypses of Baruch*, the *Sibylline Oracles*, parts of the *Assumption of Moses*, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, and many other somewhat less well known works.

To the historical or pseudo-historical writings belong *I, II and III Maccabees*, *I Esdras*, various additions to *Daniel* and *Esther*, the *Prayer of Manasses*, the *Letter of Aristeas*, *Judith* and *Tobit*. Altogether legendary in character are the *Book of Jubilees*, the *Life of Adam and Eve*, the *Story of Aseneth*, the greater part of the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* and many similar testaments, the *Rest of the Words of Baruch* and other similar writings. The *Epistle of Jeremiah* and the greater portion of the *Ascension of Isaiah* and the *Assumption of Moses* are pseudo-prophetic, that is, imitative of the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. The *Psalms of Solomon*, patterned after the Biblical *Psalms*, are altogether lyric; while didactic, and therefore closely resembling *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*, are the *Wisdom of Ben Sirach*, the *Wisdom of Solomon* and *IV Maccabees*.

Of peculiar interest are those parts of the Apocryphal writings which are inserted into or appended to the Greek translations of the Biblical books of *Esther* and *Daniel*, although not found in the Hebrew Bible itself. Thus,

after *Esther* x, 3 in the Hebrew Bible, the following addition is found in the Greek version of the book, however, strangely enough, with the proper order of the two chapters inverted:

In the second year of the reign of Artaxerxes the great, in the first day of the month Nisan, Mordechai the son of Jair, the son of Semei, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin:

A Jew who dwelt in the city of Susa, a great man and among the first of the king's court, had a dream.

Now he was of the number of the captives, whom Nebuchadonezzar king of Babylon had carried away from Jerusalem with Jechonia king of Juda:

And this was his dream: Behold there were voices, and tumults, and thunders, and earthquakes, and a disturbance upon the earth.

And behold two great dragons came forth ready to fight one against another.

And at their cry all nations were stirred up to fight against the nation of the just.

And that was a day of darkness and danger, of tribulation and distress, and great fear upon the earth.

And the nation of the just was troubled fearing their own evils, and was prepared for death.

And they cried to God: and as they were crying, a little fountain grew into a very great river, and abounded into many waters.

The light and the sun rose up, and the humble were exalted, and they devoured the glorious.

And when Mordechai had seen this, and arose out of his bed, he was thinking what God would do: and he kept it fixed in his mind, desirous to know what the dream should signify.

Then Mordechai said: God hath done these things.

I remember a dream that I saw, which signified these same things: and nothing thereof hath failed.

The little fountain which grew into a river, and was turned into a light, and into the sun, and abounded into

many waters, is Esther, whom the king married, and made queen.

But the two dragons are I and Haman.

The nations that were assembled are they that endeavored to destroy the name of the Jews.

And my nation is Israel, who cried to the Lord, and the Lord saved His people: and He delivered us from all evils, and hath wrought great signs and wonders among the nations:

And He commanded that there should be two lots, one of the people of God, and the other of all the nations.

And both lots came to the day appointed already from that time before God to all nations:

And the Lord remembered His people, and had mercy on His inheritance.

And these days shall be observed in the month of Adar, on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the same month, with all diligence and joy of the people gathered into one assembly, throughout all the generations hereafter of the people of Israel.

Similarly inserted into the third chapter of the Greek version of *Daniel* is the *Song of the Three Children*, while appended to the book are the stories of *Susanna* and of *Bel and the Dragon*. The latter is as follows:

Now the Babylonians had an idol called Bel: and there were spent upon him every day twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep, and sixty vessels of wine.

The king also worshiped him, and went every day to adore him: but Daniel adored his God. And the king said to him: Why dost thou not adore Bel?

And he answered, and said to him: Because I do not worship idols made with hands, but the living God, that created heaven and earth, and hath power over all flesh.

And the king said to him: Doth not Bel seem to thee to be a living god? Seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh every day?

Then Daniel smiled and said: O king, be not deceived: for this is but clay within, and brass without, neither hath he eaten at any time.

And the king being angry called for his priests, and said to them: If you tell me not, who it is that eateth up these expenses, you shall die.

But if you can shew that Bel eateth these things, Daniel shall die, because he hath blasphemed against Bel. And Daniel said to the king: Be it done according to thy word.

Now the priests of Bel were seventy, besides their wives, and little ones, and children. And the king went with Daniel into the temple of Bel.

And the priests of Bel said: Behold we go out: and do thou, O king, set on the meats, and make ready the wine, and shut the door fast, and seal it with thy own ring:

And when thou comest in the morning, if thou findest not that Bel hath eaten up all, we will suffer death, or else Daniel that hath lied against us.

And they little regarded it, because they had made under the table a secret entrance, and they always came in by it, and consumed those things.

So it came to pass after they were gone out, the king set the meats before Bel: and Daniel commanded his servants, and they brought ashes, and he sifted them all over the temple before the king: and going forth they shut the door, and having sealed it with the king's ring, they departed.

But the priests went in by night, according to their custom, with their wives and their children: and they ate and drank up all.

And the king arose early in the morning, and Daniel with him.

And the king said: Are the seals whole, Daniel? And he answered: They are whole, O king.

And as soon as he had opened the door, the king looked upon the table, and cried out with a loud voice: Great art thou, O Bel, and there is not any deceit with thee.

And Daniel laughed: and he held the king that he should not go in: and he said: Behold the pavement, mark whose footsteps these are.

And the king said: I see the footsteps of men, and women, and children. And the king was angry.

Then he took the priests, and their wives, and their children: and they shewed him the private doors by which they came in, and consumed the things that were on the table.

The king therefore put them to death, and delivered Bel into the power of Daniel: who destroyed him, and his temple.

And there was a great dragon in that place, and the Babylonians worshiped him.

And the king said to Daniel: Behold thou canst not say now, that this is not a living god: adore him therefore.

And Daniel said: I adore the LORD my God: for He is the living God: but that is no living god.

But give me leave, O king, and I will kill this dragon without sword or club. And the king said: I give thee leave.

Then Daniel took pitch, and fat, and hair, and boiled them together: and he made lumps, and put them into the dragon's mouth, and the dragon burst asunder. And he said: Behold him whom you worshiped.

And when the Babylonians had heard this, they took great indignation: and being gathered together against the king, they said: The king is become a Jew. He hath destroyed Bel, he hath killed the dragon, and he hath put the priests to death.

And they came to the king, and said: Deliver us Daniel, or else we will destroy thee and thy house.

And the king saw that they pressed upon him violently: and being constrained by necessity he delivered Daniel to them.

And they cast him into the den of lions, and he was there six days.

And in the den there were seven lions, and they had given to them two carcasses every day, and two sheep:

but then they were not given unto them, that they might devour Daniel.

Now there was in Judea a prophet called Habakkuk, and he had boiled pottage, and had broken bread in a bowl: and was going into the field, to carry it to the reapers.

And the angel of the LORD said to Habakkuk: Carry the dinner which thou hast into Babylon to Daniel, who is in the lions' den.

And Habakkuk said: LORD, I never saw Babylon, nor do I know the den.

And the angel of the LORD took him by the top of his head and carried him by the hair of his head, and set him in Babylon over the den in the force of his spirit.

And Habakkuk cried, saying: O Daniel, thou servant of God, take the dinner that God hath sent thee.

And Daniel said: Thou hast remembered me, O God, and Thou hast not forsaken them that love Thee.

And Daniel arose and ate. And the angel of the LORD presently set Habakkuk again in his own place.

And upon the seventh day the king came to bewail Daniel: and he came to the den, and looked in, and behold Daniel was sitting in the midst of the lions.

And the king cried out with a loud voice, saying: Great art thou, O LORD, the God of Daniel. And he drew him out of the lions' den.

But those that had been the cause of his destruction, he cast into the den, and they were devoured in a moment before him.

Then the king said: Let all the inhabitants of the whole earth fear the God of Daniel: for He is the Savior, working signs, and wonders in the earth: who hath delivered Daniel out of the lions' den.

Two of the most interesting and popular books of the Apocrypha are *Judith* and *Tobit*. Both are purely narrative in style and content. *Judith* has, moreover, a historical, or rather pseudo-historical, setting, and may well be

styled a historical romance, one of the oldest of the world's literature. The story tells how Holofernes, a general of the Assyrian King Nebuchadnezzar, invades Palestine and advances as far as Bethulia. He besieges the city, cuts off its water-supply and reduces it to dire straits. At this moment Judith, the widow of a former citizen of Bethulia and a woman of surpassing beauty, wisdom and force of character, determines to save the city and the Jewish people or die in the attempt. She puts off her widow's garments, adorns herself with her choicest raiment and ornaments, and accompanied only by a faithful maid, steals forth from the city at dawn, without informing any one of her plan. The two women take with them simple, ritually clean food, in order that they might not have to defile themselves with the prohibited viands of the enemy. Arrived in the camp, Judith is brought before Holofernes, who is at once ravished by her beauty. Judith bears herself with becoming dignity and modesty, which naturally fan the flames of Holofernes' passion. Judith remains in the camp for four days, scrupulously eating her own food and praying to God for help and strength, while with each passing day Holofernes' desire increases.

The book then continues :

And in the fourth day Holofernes made a feast to his own servants only, and called none of the officers to the banquet. Then said he to Bagoas the eunuch, who had charge over all that he had, "Go now, and per-

suade this Hebrew woman which is with thee, that she come unto us, and eat and drink with us. For, lo, it will be a shame for our person, if we shall let such a woman go, not having had her company; for if we draw her not unto us, she will laugh us to scorn."

Then went Bagoas from the presence of Holofernes, and came to her, and he said, "Let not this fair damsel fear to come to my lord, and to be honored in his presence, and drink wine, and be merry with us, and be made this day as one of the daughters of the Assyrians, which serve in the house of Nebuchadnezzar."

Then said Judith unto him, "Who am I now, that I should gainsay my lord? surely whatsoever pleaseth him I will do speedily, and it shall be my joy unto the day of my death."

So she arose, and decked herself with her apparel and all her woman's attire, and her maid went and laid soft skins on the ground for her over against Holofernes, which she had received of Bagoas for her daily use, that she might sit and eat upon them.

Now when Judith came in and sat down, Holofernes his heart was ravished with her, and his mind was moved, and he desired greatly her company; for he waited a time to deceive her, from the day that he had seen her. Then said Holofernes, "Drink now, and be merry."

So Judith said, "I will drink now, my lord, because my life is magnified in me this day more than all the days since I was born."

Then she took and ate and drank before him what her maid had prepared. And Holofernes took great delight in her, and drank much more wine than he had drunk at any time in one day since he was born.

Now when the evening was come, his servants made haste to depart and Bagoas shut his tent without, and dismissed the waiters from the presence of his lord; and they went to their beds: for they were all weary, because the feast had been long. And Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes lying along upon his bed: for he was filled with wine.

Now Judith had commanded her maid to stand without her bedchamber, and to wait for her coming forth, as she did daily: for she said she would go forth to her prayers, and she spake to Bagoas according to the same purpose.

So all went forth, and none was left in the bedchamber, neither little nor great. Then Judith, standing by his bed, said in her heart, "O LORD God of all power, look at this present upon the works of mine hands for the exaltation of Jerusalem. For now is the time to help Thine inheritance, and to execute mine enterprises to the destruction of the enemies which are risen against us."

Then she came to the pillar of the bed, which was at Holofernes' head, and took down his falchion from thence, and approached to his bed, and took hold of the hair of his head, and said, "Strengthen me, O LORD God of Israel, this day."

And she smote twice upon his neck with all her might, and she took away his head from him, and tumbled his body down from the bed, and pulled down the canopy from the pillars; and anon after she went forth, and gave Holofernes his head to her maid; and she put it in her bag of meat: so they twain went together according to their custom unto prayer: and when they passed the camp, they compassed the valley, and went up the mountain of Bethulia, and came to the gates thereof.

Then said Judith afar off to the watchmen at the gate, "Open, open now the gate: God, even our God, is with us, to shew His power yet in Jerusalem, and His forces against the enemy, as He hath even done this day."

Now when the men of her city heard her voice, they made haste to go down to the gate of their city, and they called the elders of the city. And then they ran all together, both small and great, for it was strange unto them that she was come: so they opened the gate, and received them, and made a fire for a light, and stood round about them.

Then she said to them with a loud voice, "Praise, praise God, praise God, I say, for He hath not taken away

His mercy from the house of Israel, but hath destroyed our enemies by mine hands this night."

So she took the head out of the bag, and shewed it, and said unto them, "Behold the head of Holofernes, the chief captain of the army of Assur, and behold the canopy, wherein he did lie in his drunkenness; and the LORD hath smitten him by the hand of a woman.

"As the LORD liveth, who hath kept me in my way that I went, my countenance hath deceived him to his destruction, and yet hath he not committed sin with me, to defile and shame me."

Then all the people were wonderfully astonished, and bowed themselves, and worshiped God, and said with one accord, "Blessed be Thou, O our God, which hast this day brought to nought the enemies of Thy people."

Then said Ozias unto her:

"O daughter, blessed art thou of the most high God above all the women upon the earth; and blessed be the LORD God, which hath created the heavens and the earth, which hath directed thee to the cutting off of the head of the chief of our enemies. For this thy confidence shall not depart from the heart of men, which remember the power of God for ever. May God turn these things to thee for a perpetual praise, to visit thee in good things, because thou hast not spared thy life for the affliction of our nation, but hast revenged our ruin, walking a straight way before our God."

And all the people said, "So be it; so be it."

Then said Judith unto them:

"Hear me now, my brethren, and take this head, and hang it upon the highest place of your walls. And so soon as the morning shall appear, and the sun shall come forth upon the earth, take ye every one his weapons, and go forth every valiant man out of the city, and set ye a captain over them, as though ye would go down into the field toward the watch of the Assyrians; but go not down.

"Then they shall take their armor and shall go into their camp, and raise up the captains of the army

of Assur, and they shall run to the tent of Holofernes, but shall not find him: then fear shall fall upon them, and they shall flee before your face. So ye, and all that inhabit the coast of Israel, shall pursue them, and overthrow them as they go."

And as soon as the morning arose, they hanged the head of Holofernes upon the wall, and every man took his weapons, and they went forth by bands unto the straits of the mountain.

But when the Assyrians saw them, they sent to their leaders, which came to their captains and tribunes, and to every one of their rulers. So they came to Holofernes' tent, and said to him that had the charge of all his things, "Waken now our lord: for the slaves have been bold to come down against us to battle, that they may be utterly destroyed."

Then went in Bagoas, and knocked at the door of the tent; for he thought that he had slept with Judith. But because none answered, he opened it, and went into the bed-chamber, and found him cast upon the floor dead, and his head was taken from him. Therefore he cried with a loud voice, with weeping, and sighing, and a mighty cry, and rent his garments.

After, he went into the tent where Judith lodged: and when he found her not, he leaped out to the people, and cried, "These slaves have dealt treacherously; one woman of the Hebrews hath brought shame upon the house of King Nebuchadnezzar: for, behold, Holofernes lieth upon the ground without a head."

When the captains of the Assyrians' army heard these words, they rent their coats, and their minds were wonderfully troubled, and there was a cry and a very great noise throughout the camp.

And when they that were in the tents heard, they were astonished at the thing that was done, and fear and trembling fell upon them, so that there was no man that durst abide in the sight of his neighbor, but rushing out all together, they fled into every way of the plain, and of the hill country. They also that had

camped in the mountains round about Bethulia fled away.

Then the children of Israel, every one that was a warrior among them, rushed out upon them, and fell upon them with one consent, and slew them: likewise also they that came from Jerusalem, and from all the hill country (for men had told them what things were done in the camp of their enemies), chased them with a great slaughter, until they were past Damascus and the borders thereof; and the residue, that dwelt at Bethulia, fell upon the camp of Assur, and spoiled them, and were greatly enriched.

And the children of Israel that returned from the slaughter had that which remained; and the villages and the cities, that were in the mountains and in the plain, gat many spoils: for the multitude was very great.

Then Joacim the high priest, and the ancients of the children of Israel that dwelt in Jerusalem, came to behold the good things that God had shewed to Israel, and to see Judith, and to salute her. And when they came unto her, they blessed her with one accord, and said unto her, "Thou art the exaltation of Jerusalem, thou art the great glory of Israel, thou art the great rejoicing of our nation. Thou hast done all these things by thine hand: thou hast done much good to Israel, and God is pleased therewith: blessed be thou of the Almighty Lord for evermore."

And all the people said, "So be it."

And the people spoiled the camp the space of thirty days: and they gave unto Judith Holofernes his tent, and all his plate, and beds, and vessels, and all his stuff: and she took it, and laid it on her mule; and made ready her carts, and laid them thereon.

Then all the women of Israel ran together to see her, and blessed her, and made a dance among them for her: and she took branches in her hand, and gave also to the women that were with her.

And they put a garland of olive upon her and her maid that was with her, and she went before all the people in the dance, leading all the women: and all the men



From Painting by Horace Vernet

JUDITH AND HOLOPHERNES

of Israel followed in their armor with garlands, and with songs in their mouths.

Now as soon as they entered into Jerusalem, they worshiped the Lord; and as soon as the people were purified, they offered their burnt offerings, and their free offerings, and their gifts.

Judith also dedicated all the stuff of Holofernes, which the people had given her, and gave the canopy, which she had taken out of his bedchamber, for a gift unto the Lord.

So the people continued feasting in Jerusalem before the sanctuary for the space of three months, and Judith remained with them.

After this time every one returned to his own inheritance, and Judith went to Bethulia, and remained in her own possession, and was in her time honorable in all the country. And many desired her, but none knew her all the days of her life, after that Manasses her husband was dead, and was gathered to his people. But she increased more and more in honor, and waxed old in her husband's house, being an hundred and five years old, and made her maid free; so she died in Bethulia: and they buried her in the cave of her husband Manasses. And the house of Israel lamented her seven days: and before she died, she did distribute her goods to all them that were nearest of kindred to Manasses her husband, and to them that were the nearest of her kindred.

And there was none that made the children of Israel any more afraid in the days of Judith, nor a long time after her death.

Such is the story of Judith, obviously a historical romance pure and simple, yet something more than this alone. For the name *Judith* in Hebrew means *Jewess*, or *Jewish woman*; and the author of the story undoubted-

ly intended to represent his heroine as the type of the heroic Jewish woman, ready ever to sacrifice herself for the salvation of her people and the glorification of her God.

Illustrative of the character and style of the historical books of the Apocrypha is the following passage from *II Maccabees* vi, describing the persecutions of the Jews by the Syrian tyrant, Antiochus Epiphanes, and the martyrdom of the aged hero, Eleazar:

But not long after the king sent a certain old man of Antioch, to compel the Jews to depart from the laws of their fathers and of God:

And to defile the temple that was in Jerusalem, and to call it the temple of Jupiter Olympius: and that in Gerizim of Jupiter Hospitalis, according as they were that inhabited the place.

And very bad was this invasion of evils and grievous to all.

For the temple was full of the riot and revelings of the Gentiles: and of men lying with lewd women. And women thrust themselves of their accord into the holy places, and brought in things that were not lawful.

The altar also was filled with unlawful things, which were forbidden by the laws.

And neither were the sabbaths kept, nor the solemn days of the fathers observed, neither did any man plainly profess himself to be a Jew.

But they were led by bitter constraint on the king's birthday to the sacrifices: and when the feast of Bacchus was kept, they were compelled to go about crowned with ivy in honor of Bacchus.

And there went out a decree into the neighboring cities of the Gentiles, by the suggestion of the Ptolemeans, that they also should act in like manner against the Jews, to oblige them to sacrifice:

And whosoever would not conform themselves to the ways of the Gentiles, should be put to death: then was misery to be seen.

For two women were accused to have circumcised their children: whom, when they had openly led about through the city with the infants hanging at their breasts, they threw down headlong from the walls.

And others that had met together in caves that were near, and were keeping the sabbath day privately, being discovered by Philip, were burnt with fire, because they made a conscience to help themselves with their hands, by reason of the religious observance of the day.

Now I beseech those that shall read this book, that they be not shocked at these calamities, but that they consider the things that happened, not as being for the destruction, but for the correction of our nation.

For it is a token of great goodness when sinners are not suffered to go on in their ways for a long time, but are presently punished.

For, not as with other nations (whom the Lord patiently expecteth, that when the day of judgment shall come, He may punish them in the fullness of their sins:)

Doth He also deal with us, so as to suffer our sins to come to their height, and then take vengeance on us.

And therefore He never withdraweth His mercy from us: but though He chastise His people with adversity, He forsaketh them not.

But let this suffice in a few words for a warning to the readers. And now we must come to the narration.

Eleazar one of the chief of the scribes, a man advanced in years, and of a comely countenance, was pressed to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh.

But he, choosing rather a most glorious death than a hateful life, went forward voluntarily to the torment.

And considering in what manner he was come to it, patiently bearing, he determined not to do any unlawful things for the love of life.

But they that stood by, being moved with wicked pity, for the old friendship they had with the man, taking him

aside, desired that flesh might be brought, which it was lawful for him to eat, that he might make as if he had eaten, as the king had commanded of the flesh of the sacrifice: .

That by so doing he might be delivered from death: and for the sake of their old friendship with the man they did him this courtesy.

But he began to consider the dignity of his age, and his ancient years, and the inbred honor of his gray head, and his good life and conversation from a child: and he answered without delay, according to the ordinances of the holy law made by God, saying, that he would rather be sent into the other world.

For it doth not become our age, said he, to dissemble: whereby many young persons might think that Eleazar, at the age of fourscore and ten years, was gone over to the life of the heathens:

And so they, through my dissimulation, and for a little time of a corruptible life, should be deceived, and hereby I should bring a stain and a curse upon my old age.

For though, for the present time, I should be delivered from the punishments of men, yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty neither alive nor dead.

Wherefore by departing manfully out of this life, I shall shew myself worthy of my old age:

And I shall leave an example of fortitude to young men, if with a ready mind and constancy I suffer an honorable death, for the most venerable and most holy laws. And having spoken thus, he was forthwith carried to execution.

And they that led him, and had been a little before more mild, were changed to wrath for the words he had spoken, which they thought were uttered out of arrogance.

But when he was now ready to die with the stripes, he groaned, and said: O Lord, who hast the holy knowledge, Thou knowest manifestly that whereas I might be delivered from death, I suffer grievous pains in body:

but in soul am well content to suffer these things because I fear Thee.

Thus did this man die, leaving not only to young men, but also to the whole nation, the memory of his death for an example of virtue and fortitude.

Just as *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes* in the Bible were popularly ascribed to Solomon, so also the Apocryphal book of the *Wisdom of Solomon*. The opening words of the book are indicative of its general character:

Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth: think of the Lord with a good heart, and in simplicity of heart, seek Him. He will be found by them that tempt Him not; and sheweth Himself unto such as do not distrust Him. Perverse thoughts separate from God: His power, when it is tried, reproveth the unwise. For into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter, nor shall it dwell in the body that is subject unto sin.

The following is a portion of the prayer for wisdom in Chapter IV:

O God of my fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things with Thy word, and ordained man through Thy wisdom, that he should have dominion over the creatures which Thou hast made and order the world according to equity and righteousness, and execute judgment with an upright heart—

Give me wisdom, that sitteth by Thy throne, and reject me not from among Thy children, for I Thy servant and son of thine handmaid am a feeble person, and of a short time, and too young for the understanding of judgment and laws; for though a man be never so perfect among the children of men, yet if Thy wisdom be not with him, he shall be nothing regarded.

Thou hast chosen me to be a king of Thy people, and a judge of Thy sons and daughters; Thou hast commanded

me to build a temple upon Thy holy mount, and an altar in the city wherein Thou dwellest, a resemblance of the holy tabernacle, which Thou hast prepared from the beginning.

Wisdom was with Thee, which knoweth Thy works, and was present when Thou madest the world, and knew what was acceptable in Thy sight, and right in Thy commandments.

O, send her out of Thy holy heavens, and from the throne of Thy glory, that being present she may labor with me, that I may know what is pleasing unto Thee, for she knoweth and understandeth all things, and she shall lead me soberly in my doings, and preserve me in her power. So shall my works be acceptable, and then shall I judge Thy people righteously, and be worthy to sit in my father's seat.

Abounding in homely wisdom and knowledge of human nature, which has changed but little, if at all, in the twenty-one hundred years since the book was written, is the *Wisdom of Ben Sirach*, composed in Hebrew about 200 B. C., and later translated into Greek by Ben Sirach's grandson, as a duty of piety and affection.

This advice is taken from Chapter iv, and is an excellent example of parallelism in Hebrew prose-poetry :

My son, defraud not the poor of his living,
And make not the needy eyes to wait long.
Make not an hungry soul sorrowful,
Neither provoke a man in his distress.
Add not more trouble to an heart that is vexed,
And delay not to give to him that is in need,
Reject not the supplication of the afflicted,
Neither turn away thy face from a poor man.
Turn not away thine eye from the needy,

And give him no occasion to curse thee :
For if he curse thee in bitterness of soul,
His prayer shall be heard by Him that made him.

The following, on the choice of a friend, cannot be excelled easily in thought or expression :

Be in peace with many ; nevertheless, have but one counselor of a thousand. If thou wouldest get a friend, prove him first and be not hasty to credit him ; for sometimes a man is a friend for his own occasion, and will not abide in the day of trouble. And there is a friend, who being turned to enmity, discovers things to thy reproach. Again, some friend is a companion at the table, and will not continue in the day of thy affliction ; in thy prosperity he will be as thyself and will be bold over thy servants, but if thou be brought low, he will be against thee, and will hide himself from thy face.

Separate thyself from thine enemies, and take heed of thy friends. A faithful friend is a strong defense, and he that hath found such an one has found a treasure. Nothing doth countervail a faithful friend, and his excellency is invaluable.

A faithful friend is the medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord shall find Him. Whoso feareth the Lord shall direct his friendship aright : for as he is, so shall his neighbor be also.

The following passages are culled almost at random from this wonderful old book with its wealth of quaint wisdom and sage counsel :

He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith, and he that hath fellowship with a proud man shall be like unto him. Burden not thyself above thy power while thou livest, and have no fellowship with one that is mightier and richer than thyself : for how agree the kettle and the earthen pot together ? If one be smitten against the other, it shall be broken.

The heart of a man changes his countenance, whether it be for good or evil; and a merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance. A cheerful countenance is a token of a heart that is in prosperity,—and the finding out of parables is a wearisome labor of the mind.

Much experience is the crown of old men, and the fear of God is their glory.

There are nine things, which I have judged in mine heart to be happy, and the tenth I will utter with my tongue:

A man that hath joy of his children;
 He that liveth to see the fall of his enemy;
 Well is he that dwelleth with a wife of understanding;
 That hath not slipped with his tongue;
 That hath not served a man more unworthy than himself;
 Well is he that hath found prudence;
 That speaketh in the ears of them that will hear;
 O, how great is he that findeth wisdom;
 There is none above him that feareth the LORD.

But the love of God passeth all things for illumination: he, that holdeth it, whereto shall he be likened? The fear of the LORD is the beginning of His love, and faith is the beginning of cleaving unto Him.

Illustrative of the prophetic, or rather pseudo-prophetic literature of the Apocrypha, and almost lyric in character is *Baruch v*:

Put off, O Jerusalem, the garment of thy mourning, and affliction: and put on the beauty, and honor of that everlasting glory which thou hast from God.

God will clothe thee with the double garment of justice, and will set a crown on thy head of everlasting honor.

For God will shew His brightness in thee, to every one under heaven.

For thy name shall be named to thee by God for ever: the peace of justice, and honor of piety.

Arise, O Jerusalem, and stand on high: and look about towards the east, and behold thy children gathered together from the rising to the setting sun, by the word of the Holy One rejoicing in the remembrance of God.

For they went out from thee on foot, led by the enemies: but the LORD will bring them to thee exalted with honor as children of the kingdom.

For God hath appointed to bring down every high mountain, and the everlasting rocks, and to fill up the valleys to make them even with the ground: that Israel may walk diligently to the honor of God.

Moreover the woods, and every sweet-smelling tree have overshadowed Israel by the commandment of God.

For God will bring Israel with joy in the light of His majesty, with mercy, and justice, that cometh from Him.

Of surpassing lyric beauty, worthy of the noblest of the Biblical *Psalms*, is the eleventh of the *Psalms of Solomon*, one of the works of the Pseudepigrapha, that has been preserved in a Syriac translation of the original Hebrew:

Proclaim upon the trumpet in Jerusalem,
Upon the well-known trumpet of the Holy One;
Announce in Jerusalem the voice of the messengers,
Because God hath compassion upon Israel in His loving care.

Stand up, O Jerusalem, erect, and behold thy sons:
For from the East they are assembled by the Lord, and
from the West;

And from the North they come for the celebration of their God,

And from the distant isles God gathereth them.
Lofty mountains hath He humbled and made level before them;

And the hills fled away at their approach.
The cedars gave shade unto them as they passed by,
And every fragrant tree God made to breathe sweet odors upon them;

That Israel might pass by under the shelter of the glory
of their God.

Clothe thyself, O Jerusalem, in thy garments of glory;
Make ready thy robes of holiness;
Because God hath spoken good for Israel, now and for
evermore!

May the LORD do that which He hath spoken concerning
Israel

And concerning Jerusalem;
May the LORD establish it for Israel in the name of His
glory;

And may the favor of the LORD be upon Israel, now and
evermore!

Finally, in the *Sibylline Oracles* (Book III,
11, 218-247), is found the following noble
appreciation of the Hebrew people:

There is a city in the land of the Chaldaeans from
which arose the most righteous race of men, whose care
was good counsel and fair deeds. For they regard not
with anxious thought the course of sun and moon, nor the
wonders that are found on earth, nor the depth of ocean's
blue-eyed sea, nor the omens of a sneeze and the birds of
the augur, nor seers, nor sorcerers, nor charmers, nor ventriloquists' fond deceits; they study not the predictions
of Chaldaean astrologers; they observe not the stars;
for veriest fraud are all such things, which men in their
folly day by day explore, exercising their souls in no
useful work, teaching error unto hapless mortals; whence
many evils have befallen the inhabitants of the earth, so
that they have strayed from the paths of righteousness.
But, on the other hand, this people make righteousness
and virtue their sole care; they shun avarice, which to
the race of man brings numberless evils, wars and famine
past escape. Just bounds are theirs in town and field;
no thief steals by night into their houses; they harry not
their neighbors' flocks of oxen, sheep and goats, nor
violate their neighbors' boundaries; the rich man vexes

not his poorer brother, nor harasses the widow, but rather aids her from his stores of corn and wine and oil; ever is he a blessing to them who have nothing; ever of his harvest he gives a share to the needy. Thus they fulfill the command of the great God, which is their ordered song; for the heavenly Father has given the earth as the common possession of all men. (Quoted from Wm. J. Deane, *Pseudepigrapha*.)



POOL NEAR A TEMPLE



CHAPTER VI

MISHNA, TALMUD AND MIDRASH

ORAL AND WRITTEN LAW. When the Pharisees sought to democratize Judaism by restricting the privileges of the Sadducean priesthood, they found it necessary to justify their proposed innovations. Hence they developed the theory of the oral Law, viz., that Moses received *two* laws on Sinai, the written Law in the Bible, and an oral Law, which was handed down by word of mouth from father to son from the days of Moses to those of the Rabbis. Much of the oral Law, they held, could be derived by interpretation from the written Law.

Hillel, the great teacher, who lived at the beginning of the present era, formulated seven

rules whereby the Biblical text could be interpreted, and the oral Law deduced from it. In the beginning of the second century these seven rules were increased to thirteen by Rabbi Ishmael. Most of Ishmael's rules were logical methods of analysis and inference. But Rabbi Akiba, the famous contemporary of Rabbi Ishmael, went beyond the bounds of logic in his interpretations, and insisted that every seemingly superfluous letter in Scripture had some special meaning; thus in an unusual use of the words "and" or "but" and similar particles he would find the basis for some one of the oral laws.

It was an accepted principle that the oral Law was to remain oral, and was never to be put in writing. But in time, as the oral Law developed, it became almost impossible for any one to remember its countless precepts. Some way had to be found to arrange systematically the oral laws so that they would be less difficult to learn and remember. After several unsatisfactory codifications, the arrangement which finally prevailed was the division of all the oral laws into six groups, or booklets, called "orders." The laws in these six orders were no longer taught in connection with the written Law of the Bible, but were stated now as independent laws. This collection of the oral laws in these six orders was called the *Mishna (Instruction)*. The older system of teaching oral laws, in connection with the verses of Scripture upon which they were thought to be

based, was now called *Midrash* (*Investigation*), i. e., the investigation of the text of the written Law in order to find hints at the oral Law implied in it. The Mishna was gradually amplified, and was put into final shape by Rabbi Judah the Patriarch, about A. D. 200. Owing to the popular regard for Rabbi Judah and his standing as the spiritual head of the Jewish community in Palestine, this Mishna became the authoritative codification of the oral Law.

The six orders of the Mishna, into which all the oral laws were divided, are (1) *Seeds*, which records all the laws pertaining to agriculture, such as leaving the fields fallow in the Sabbatical year, and bringing up the first-fruits to Jerusalem; (2) *Seasons*, which deals with the religious calendar and the laws of the holy days, such as the Passover and the Day of Atonement; (3) *Women*, containing all the laws pertaining to women, such as the laws of marriage and divorce; (4) *Damages*, dealing with civil and criminal law; (5) *Holy Things*, treating of the sacrifices, the regular offering, the festival offering and similar matters; and (6) *Purities*, including all the laws of ritual cleanliness. These six orders are further subdivided into tractates, each tractate containing the laws bearing upon one particular subject; thus the tractates, *Sabbath*, *Sanhedrin*, and the like.

Some of the disciples of Rabbi Judah were Babylonians who had come to Palestine to study. When Rabbi Judah had completed the

Mishna and had also given partial ordination to these disciples, they returned to Babylonia, taking copies of the Mishna with them. They established schools in Babylonia, where the textbook was the Mishna, and the starting-point of every discussion was some law in the Mishna. These discussions, comments, adjustments of difficulties and final conclusions were recorded somehow, and gradually grew in the course of a few generations into a huge mass of important material. Finally it became necessary to reduce this vast, unorganized mass of material to systematic form. This task required the labors of two generations of Rabbis, and was completed about A. D. 500. The completed work was called the *Babylonian Talmud*. Similar studies and discussions had been carried on in Palestine until the closing of the schools there. The records of these studies, too, were collected about A. D. 350, and this work was called the *Palestinian, or Jerusalem, Talmud*. Thus there are two Talmuds, the Palestinian and the Babylonian. Of these the latter is by far the larger; it contains much of the material that is found in the Palestinian Talmud, and also much additional matter. The Babylonian Talmud is the one which is generally studied and quoted.

The Talmud consists of much more than mere law. It may be truly said to contain some trace of every current of Jewish thought which found expression during the three centuries of its development. It, too, is truly a national

literature. It narrates history, gives ethical admonitions, discusses theology, makes predictions about the coming of the Messiah, is rich in folklore, and touches upon innumerable other topics, for all phases of life were of interest to the teachers and students in the schools; therefore all found their way into the discussions, and so were recorded in the Talmud. The strictly legal matter in the Talmud is called *Halacha* (*Usage*, or *Practice*), and the ethical, historical, philosophical or folkloristic matter is called *Agada* (*Narration*).

In time the need arose of codifying the Talmudic laws. The great philosopher, Moses Maimonides, in the twelfth century, compiled a remarkably systematic code of all the laws of the Talmud. He called his book by the double title, *The Strong Hand, or The Repetition of the Law*. In the sixteenth century Joseph Caro prepared an even more systematic and practical code, the *Shulchan Aruk* (*The Set Table*), which has been accepted throughout the world as the guide for orthodox Jewish religious life.

The Agada of the Talmud was not the only ethical, religious and philosophical literature developed in those days of the growth of the oral Law. During all the centuries of the development of the Mishna and the Talmud, synagogue life flourished in Palestine, Babylonia and wherever else Jews lived. In these synagogues the Scriptures were read regularly, and sermons were delivered based upon the

texts just read. Just as the oral Law was at first developed from the written Law in the schools by the method of Midrash, i. e., by searching interpretation of the Scriptures, so, too, in the synagogues Agadic ideas, or ethical and philosophical principles, were developed from Scriptures by the same method of Midrash. In the case of the oral Law, however, the Midrash method of teaching was abandoned in favor of the more systematic Mishna method, but with the sermonic literature there was no particular need of systematic arrangement. Hence the Midrash method of developing and recording the sermons was retained; that is to say, the ethical and philosophical sermonic literature which sprang up in the synagogues during the time when the oral Law was developed in the schools, retained its connections with the scriptural verses from which it was derived, and was taught, never as independent, absolute and abstract ethical principles, but always as a commentary and exposition of the text of the Bible. Hence, when we say *Midrash* nowadays we mean two things, first, the rich sermonic literature that has gradually been collected and edited in various books, and second, these books themselves. The best known of these books or *Midrashim* (plural of *Midrash*) are the so-called *Great Midrash*, the sermonic exposition of the Pentateuch, and the *Pesikta*, a collection of extracts of sermons for the most important Sabbaths of the year.

II. THE MISHNA. It is remarkable that a tractate of the nature of *The Ethics of the Fathers* should be included in a strictly legal work such as the Mishna is. Possibly the reason for this was to prove the authenticity of the oral Law, since the opening words of this tractate are, "Moses received the Law from Sinai, and handed it to Joshua; Joshua handed it to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Synod." Thus we are told of an uninterrupted tradition from Moses to the Rabbis. Another possible reason for the inclusion of this ethical work in the legal code was to indicate that the fully worthy life must do more than merely obey the law; it must conform also to higher laws of right and wrong.

Some of the finest sayings of this remarkable booklet are the following:

FROM CHAPTER ONE

Antigonos of Socho used to say; Be not like servants who serve the master for the sake of receiving a reward; be rather like servants who serve the master without thinking of a reward; and let the fear of God be upon you.

Jose ben Joezer, of Zeredah, used to say; Let thy house be a meeting-place for the wise; sit gladly at their feet, and drink in their words with eagerness.

Nittai of Arbela said; Keep far from a bad neighbor, and do not associate with the wicked, and abandon not the belief in retribution.

Hillel was wont to say; Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving all fellow-creatures, and trying to bring them nigh unto the Torah.

He also used to say; He who seeks to make his name great, loses his name; he who does not increase his knowledge, decreases it; he who does not seek to acquire wisdom, forfeits his life; and he who makes unworthy use of his learning is wasting himself.

He also used to say; If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?

Rabban Simon ben Gamaliel said; All my days have been passed in the company of the wise, and I have found naught better than silence; not learning is the chief thing, but doing; whoever multiplies words, causes sin.

FROM CHAPTER TWO

Rabbi Judah said; Which is the right course that a man should choose for himself?—That which honors him in his own eyes and in the eyes of his fellow-men. Be as scrupulous about a light command as about a grave one, for thou knowest not the measure of reward allotted for those precepts. Balance the material loss involved in the observance of a precept against the spiritual gain, and the material gain accruing from transgression against the material loss. Reflect upon three things, and thou wilt not fall into sin: Know what is above thee, a seeing eye, a hearing ear, and all thy deeds recorded in a book.

Rabbi Eliezer said; Let the honor of thy neighbor be as dear to thee as thine own; suffer not thyself to be easily angered; and repent one day before thy death.

Rabbi Tarphon said; The day is short, the work is vast, the laborers are slothful, the reward is great, and the Master is urgent.

He also used to say; It is not incumbent upon thee to complete the work, but neither art thou free to desist from it altogether.

FROM CHAPTER THREE

Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa said; He in whom fear of sin takes precedence of wisdom, his wisdom will endure; but he in whom wisdom takes precedence of fear of sin,

his wisdom will not endure. He also used to say; He whose works exceed his wisdom, his wisdom will endure; but he whose wisdom exceeds his works, his wisdom will not endure. He also used to say; He who has earned man's esteem, will also receive favor of God; but he who is not worthy of such esteem, cannot expect to find favor with God.

Rabbi Akiba used to say; Everything is given on trust, and a net is spread for all the living; the store is open and the dealer sells on credit; the ledger lies open and the hand makes entry; whoever wishes may come and borrow; but the collectors make their regular daily rounds, and exact payment from man with or without his consent; they have a firm basis for their claim, and the judgment is founded on truth.

FROM CHAPTER FOUR

Ben Zoma said; Who is wise? He who learns from everybody; as it is written: From all my teachers I have gathered instruction. Who is a hero? He who controls his passions; as it is said: He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. Who is rich? He who rejoiceth in his lot; as it is written: When thou eatest the labor of thy hands, happy art thou, and it shall be well with thee. Who is honored? He who honors his fellow-men; as it is written: For them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.

Ben Azzai said; Hasten to do even a slight precept, and flee from transgression; for one virtue brings another in its train, and one sin entails another; for the reward of virtue is virtue itself, and sin is requited with sin.

He also used to say; Despise no man, and consider nothing as too far-removed to come to pass; for there is no man but has his day, and no thing but has its place.

Rabbi Simon said; There are three crowns, the crown of the Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of royalty; but the crown of a good name excels them all.

Rabbi Jacob said; This world is, as it were, the ante-chamber of the world to come; prepare thyself in the ante-chamber that thou mayest be admitted into the banquet hall.

He also used to say; One hour of repentance and good deeds in this world is better than the whole life of the world to come.

Rabbi Simon ben Elazar said; Seek not to appease thy neighbor in the hour of his wrath, nor to comfort him while his dead still lies before him; in the hour when his vow is made pester him not with questions, and strive not to see him in the hour of his disgrace.

FROM CHAPTER FIVE

Seven things mark the uncultured, and seven things mark the wise. The wise man does not speak before one greater in wisdom than he; he does not interrupt another in his speech; he is not hasty to answer; he asks pertinent questions, and answers to the point; he speaks first upon the matter first in order, and last upon the last; when he does not understand the matter under discussion, he confesses: I do not understand it; and when the truth is presented, he readily acknowledges it. The reverse of these things marks the uncultured man.

The sword came into the world because of justice being delayed, because of justice being perverted, and because of those who render wrong decisions.

Every controversy waged in the service of God must in the end lead to a permanent result; but if not waged in the service of God, it cannot lead to a permanent result.

Judah ben Tema said; Be bold as a leopard, swift as an eagle, fleet as a hart, and strong as a lion, to do the will of thy Father who is in heaven.

According to the Biblical law (*Leviticus* xix, 9), the corners of the fields at harvest were to be left to the poor. The Mishna tractate, *Corner of the Field*, discusses and elab-

orates upon this law, as well as upon other laws of charity:

The itinerant poor shall not be given less than a loaf of bread worth a certain price, when four measures of flour cost a *selah* (a certain coin, possibly the equivalent of a *shekel*). (The object of this regulation was to secure for the poor wanderer a loaf of bread, the size of which would not vary with the fluctuation in the price of flour.) If he wishes to stay over night, provision must be made for him. If he wishes to remain over the Sabbath, he shall be provided with three meals. (Three meals were eaten on the Sabbath and but two on the other days.) He who has provision for two meals shall not take charity from the daily distribution. He who has provision for fourteen meals shall not take from the weekly distribution.

A man who possesses two hundred *zuz* (a small coin), shall not take the gleanings of the field, the forgotten sheaves, the neglected corner of the field, and the tithe of the poor. (These privileges belonged only to those who were actually destitute.) If he has two hundred *zuz* lacking just one *denarium* (the smallest coin of that time), he may accept charity even from a thousand people at one time.

He who has only fifty *zuz*, but uses them in active business, may no longer take charity. Whoever does not really need to take charity, and yet does so, will some day before his death be in actual need of help from his fellow-men. Whoever needs charity, and yet manages to refrain from accepting it, will some day before his death have the opportunity of helping others out of his own abundance.

The Biblical law (*Deuteronomy* xxvi, 2) requires that the first ripe fruits be brought to Jerusalem. The Mishna tractate, *First-fruits*, describes in detail the method of procedure:

How are the first-fruits brought up to Jerusalem? All the villagers in a certain district gather together to the district capital where they spend the night in the city streets, for they may not enter the houses. Early in the morning the chief calls out; "Arise, let us go up to Zion, to the house of the Lord, our God."

Those that live near Jerusalem bring figs and grapes, and those that live too far for the fresh fruit to keep, bring dried figs and raisins. The ox to be offered as a sacrifice walks before the procession. His horns are gilded; a chaplet of olive leaves crowns his head. The flute sounds before them as they march, until they approach Jerusalem. When they draw near to the holy city they send messengers ahead to announce their coming; then they decorate their first-fruits. The officers, the officials of the priests and the treasurers form a deputation to meet them; the size of the deputation depends upon the status of those who come. All the workmen of Jerusalem stand to meet them, and greet them, saying; "Our brethren, men of the city of so-and-so, come ye in peace."

The flute sounds before them until they reach the mount of the Temple. Having reached the Temple, each pilgrim, even were he King Agrippa, must take his own basket upon his shoulders. Then he enters the courtyard, and the Levites break forth into song; "I extol Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast lifted me up."

While the basket is still upon his shoulder, he recites the Biblical portion treating of the first-fruits, up to the words, "My father Jacob was a wandering Aramaean" (*Deuteronomy xxvi, 1-10*). At these words he lets down the basket from his shoulder and grasps it by its rims. The priest puts his hand under the basket and waves it. Then the pilgrim completes the reading, lays down the basket at the side of the altar, bows and departs.

The spirit of the ancient Jewish criminal law, and of the judges who administered it, may be learned from the following extracts

from the Mishna. Hillel, the great teacher, was wont to say, "Judge not thy neighbor until thou hast stood in his place." Joshua ben Perachia, an earlier teacher, charged his disciples to judge all men from the presumption of their innocence. And still another teacher, Judah ben Tabbai, counseled the judges to regard as innocent even those who had been found guilty by the court, but who had fulfilled the sentence imposed upon them. The death sentence was pronounced only upon rare occasions, and was hemmed in by all manner of restrictions which made it difficult to be carried out. That Sanhedrin which imposed the death sentence more than once was called "The Bloody Sanhedrin." The following passage from Mishna tractate *Sanhedrin*, describes the examination of witnesses in a case involving capital punishment, and shows the eagerness of the Sanhedrin to find the defendant innocent rather than guilty:

How do they, i.e., the Sanhedrin, impress witnesses with the significance of their testimony in cases involving capital punishment? They are brought before the Sanhedrin, and are addressed solemnly; "Perhaps you speak out of mere suspicion or from rumor; or perhaps you got your information from another witness, or perhaps from an untrustworthy man; or perhaps you do not know that we shall have to subject you to examination and cross-examination. Realize that cases involving capital punishment are not like cases involving damages. For in the latter a man pays his fine, and thus atones for his wrong; but in cases involving capital punishment, the blood of the defendant and the blood of all his pos-

terity forever are dependent upon the testimony of the witness. We can infer this from the case of Cain, who killed his brother; for in the Bible it says; "The bloods (the Hebrew uses the plural and not the singular, blood) of thy brother cry out." (*Genesis* iv, 10.) It does not say, "The blood of thy brother," but "the bloods of thy brother;" this means his blood and the blood of his posterity. . . . Therefore man was created singly (and not in groups like the other creatures), to teach thee that whoever destroys a single life from among the children of men, is regarded by Scriptures as if he had destroyed a world full of human beings; and he who preserves the life of a single man, is regarded by Scriptures as if he had kept alive a world full of living beings.

III. THE TALMUD. As a simple example of the *Halacha*, or legalistic discussion in the Talmud of the laws of the Mishna, the following passage from the tractate *Blessings*, may be cited. Commenting upon the statement in the Mishna that in the opinion of Rabbi Eliezer the evening prayer may be said until the first watch of the night, the Talmud remarks:

Does Rabbi Eliezer believe that the night is divided into three or into four watches? If he believes that the night is divided into three watches, then he could say simply that the evening prayer may be said until the fourth hour of the night (since the night has twelve hours). If he believes that the night is divided into four watches, then he could say simply that the evening prayer may be said until the third hour. As a matter of fact he believes that the night is divided into three watches; and the reason that he does not say simply, "Until the fourth hour of the night," but uses instead the word "watch," is because he wishes to remind us that the watches of the night are kept in heaven as well as on earth. For we learn elsewhere that Rabbi Eliezer said that the night is divided into three watches, and that at

every watch the Holy One, blessed be He, roareth like a lion; for it is said (*Jeremiah xxv, 20*); "The Lord roareth from on high, and uttereth His voice from His holy habitation. He roareth mightily concerning His habitation." . . . He saith; "Woe unto the children because of whose sins I have destroyed My Temple, burnt My sanctuary, and exiled My sons among the nations!"

The three following anecdotes will be of interest to students of folklore. The first of these Longfellow has put into poetic form in his "*Spanish Jew's Tale*," in *Tales of a Wayside Inn*.

THE SWORD OF THE ANGEL OF DEATH

When Rabbi Joshua ben Levi was dying, God said to the Angel of Death, "Go to him and do whatsoever he asks of thee." The Angel of Death obeyed. The dying Rabbi said to him, "Show me my place in Paradise." The angel agreed. Said the Rabbi, "Give me thy sword, lest it terrify me on the way thither." He gave him the sword. When they came there, the angel lifted him up and showed him Paradise. Immediately Rabbi Joshua leaped over the wall and fell on the other side into Paradise. The angel seized him by the hem of his garment, but the Rabbi said, "I swear that I will not depart from here." Then said the Holy One, blessed be He, "If Rabbi Joshua has ever in his lifetime retracted any oath, he must depart, but if not, he may remain." Thereupon the angel said to the Rabbi, "Return my sword." He refused. But a heavenly voice sounded forth, "Give it to him; it is needed for his task among men." Elijah walked before the Rabbi and proclaimed, "Make way for the son of Levi! Make way for the son of Levi!" The Rabbi walked through Paradise and found Rabbi Simon ben Yochai seated upon thirteen golden seats. Said the latter, "Are you the son of Levi?" He replied, "Yes." "Was the rainbow ever seen during your lifetime?" (The rainbow is the sign of God's covenant

never to destroy the world again with a flood. [*Genesis ix, 13 ff.*] If there happened to be a perfectly righteous man in a generation, it was thought that the world would be saved through his merits for so long as he lived, and therefore the rainbow would have been unnecessary. Rabbi Simon knew how righteous Rabbi Joshua had been, and was certain that the rainbow need not have appeared during his generation; therefore his question.) Said he, "Yes." "If so, then you are not the son of Levi." Actually, however, the rainbow had not appeared during Rabbi Joshua's lifetime, but the modest Rabbi was unwilling to boast of it.

This story seems to answer in the affirmative the question, Do the dead know what happens on earth?

A TALMUDIC GHOST STORY

Once upon a time a certain pious man gave money to the poor just before the New Year in a time of drought. His wife scolded him, so he fled and spent the night in a cemetery. He heard two departed spirits conversing. One said, "Come, let us wander through the world and hear behind the curtain what misfortunes are coming upon the earth." But the other replied, "I cannot come, for I lie buried on a bed of rushes. But go thou, and whatever thou hearest, tell me." She went away, wandered through the world, and returned. Her companion said to her, "Friend, what hast thou heard behind the curtain?" Said she, "I heard that any seed sown during the first rain will be smitten by hail." The man overheard this and went home. He sowed his seed during the second rain. Everybody's grain was smitten by hail, but his was not.

The next year he went again and spent the night in the cemetery. He heard the same two spirits conversing. One said, "Come, let us wander through the world and hear behind the curtain what punishment will come on earth." Said her companion, "Did I not tell thee that

I cannot come, because I lie buried on a bed of rushes? But go thou, and whatever thou hearest, come and tell me." She went, wandered through the world and returned. Her companion said, "Tell me what thou hast heard behind the curtain." Said she, "I heard that whatever seed is sown during the latter rain will be blasted." The man went and sowed his seed during the early rain, and everybody's seed was blasted except his. His wife said to him, "Why is it that last year everybody's grain was smitten except yours, and this year everybody's grain is blasted except yours?" Thereupon he told her all that had happened.

Some time later a quarrel arose between the wife of the pious man and the mother of the girl whose spirit refused to accompany the other spirit through the world. The wife said, "Come, I will show thee that thy daughter lies buried on a bed of rushes."

The next year the pious man went to spend the night in the cemetery, and he heard the same two spirits conversing. One said, "Come, let us wander through the world and hear behind the curtain what misfortunes are coming on earth." But the other replied, "Let be; for the matters that we spoke of among ourselves, have already been heard among the living."

Clearly the dead know what is happening on earth.

KING SOLOMON AND THE MAGIC WORM; A TALMUDIC FAIRY TALE

It is written, "And the Temple, when it was built, was made of entire stones as they had been prepared at the quarry, so that neither hammer nor axe nor any iron tool was heard in the house, while it was in building" (*I Kings*, vi, 7). The Rabbis were asked by Solomon, "How can I manage to build it without using iron tools?" They answered, "There is that magic worm *Shamir*, which Moses used to engrave the stones of the ephod." Solomon asked, "Where can I find it?" They

replied, "Bring demons and bind them together; perhaps they know where it is and will tell you."

So Solomon brought two demons, bound them together, and asked them about the magic worm. But they replied, "We do not know where the worm may be found. But perhaps Ashmodai, the king of the demons, may know." Then Solomon asked, "Where can he be found?" Said the demons, "At a certain mountain, where he has dug a pit which he has filled with water. He has covered the pit with a stone and sealed it with his own seal. Every day he ascends into the heavens. When he has finished his stay in heaven he descends to earth. Then he examines the seal, removes the stone, drinks from the well, covers it again, and seals it once more, and then departs."

King Solomon sent Benaiah ben Yehoiada to capture Ashmodai, and gave him as a help a chain and a rope upon which the name of God was engraved, and also some fleeces of wool and some barrels of wine. When Benaiah came to the mountain, he dug a well beneath the one in which Ashmodai kept his water. He let the water flow from the latter into the lower pit, and then stopped up the communicating channel with the fleeces of wool. Then he dug another pit above Ashmodai's well, which was now empty, and by means of it he filled the demon's well with the wine which he had brought along. He then carefully concealed all evidences of his work, and then hid in a nearby tree.

When Ashmodai came he examined the seal and found it intact. When he removed the stone and found the wine he said, "'Wine is a mocker and strong drink is noisy; and whosoever indulges therein will never be wise.' (*Proverbs xx, 1.*) Furthermore it is said, 'Lewdness and wine and new wine take away the heart.' (*Hosea, iv, 11.*) So I shall not drink of it." But when he became thirsty, he could not restrain himself, and he drank the wine. He became drunk and lay down upon the ground.

Then Benaiah descended from the tree and bound him with the rope. Ashmodai awoke and tried to free himself. But Benaiah said, "The name of thy Master holds thee fast."

As Benaiah led him to Solomon they passed a date palm. Ashmodai rubbed against it and the tree fell. They passed a house, and he threw it over. As they passed the hut of a widow, she came out and begged them to spare her home. Ashmodai, complying with her petition, bent his body aside, so as not to touch the house, but in so doing he broke one of his bones. Then he said, "This is what the verse means, 'And a soft tongue breaketh the bone.'" (*Proverb.* xxv, 15.) As they went along Ashmodai saw a blind man straying from the road, and he put him back on the road. Then he saw a drunken man staggering off the path, and he put him back also. Then he saw a bride in a wedding procession rejoicing, and he wept. As they went along they heard a man say to a shoemaker, "Make me shoes that will last for seven years," and Ashmodai laughed. They passed a magician practicing divination, and again Ashmodai laughed.

When they came to Jerusalem they did not bring Ashmodai before King Solomon for three days. On the first day Ashmodai wondered at this. But Solomon commanded his servants, "Give him drink." Then Ashmodai took a brick and set it upon another brick. They reported this to Solomon, and he said, "What Ashmodai meant was that you should give him more." On the next day Ashmodai again wondered why he was not brought into the king's presence. But Solomon commanded, "Give him plenty of food." When they had done so, Ashmodai took the brick which he had set upon the second brick and placed it upon the ground. The servants reported this to the king. Then Solomon said, "Withhold food from him." On the third day he was brought before the king.

When Ashmodai came into the presence of Solomon, he took a reed, measured off four cubits, and cast the

reed before the king, and said, "When a man dies, all that he holds of this earth is four cubits (the grave). You, O King, have conquered the whole earth, yet you are not satisfied and wish to conquer me, the king of the demons!" But Solomon replied, "Nay, I wish naught from thee. I would build the Temple, and need the magic worm *Shamir*, with which to cut the stones." Then Ashmodai answered, "The worm is not with me. It is guarded by the Prince of the Sea. He entrusts it to none but the wild cock, whom he has made to swear to take good care of it. He has placed the fowl upon a sterile mountain, split a cleft in the hillside, and gathered seed and planted them in the cleft. The hen lives upon that food. So, O King, seek out the nest of that fowl and cover the nest in which the young are lying, with a sheet of transparent crystal. When the fowl comes and discovers that it cannot get at its young, it will bring the *Shamir* to split the crystal."

Thereupon a messenger of the king sought out the nest, and when he found it he covered it with crystal. When the bird brought the *Shamir* to cut through the crystal, the messenger threw a stone, frightened the bird away, captured the worm and brought it back to Solomon.

Then Benaiah said to Ashmodai, "Why, when I was bringing you to Solomon, and you saw the blind man wandering from the road, did you guide him back?" Ashmodai replied, "Because it was proclaimed in heaven that that blind man was a perfect saint, and that whoever would do him a kindness would merit life in the world to come." "But why," asked Benaiah, "did you set that reeling drunkard back upon the road?" "Because he was thoroughly wicked, and I did him a kindness now, in order that he may be destroyed utterly in the world to come." "And why, when you saw that bridal procession, did you weep?" "Because her husband was destined to die within thirty days, and she would have to wait thirteen years before her brother-in-law would become old enough to remarry her." "And why did you laugh when you heard the man tell the shoe-

maker to make him shoes which would last for seven years?" "Because that man is not certain that he will live seven days longer, and he wants shoes that will last for seven years." "And why did you laugh when you saw the magician practicing divination?" "Because," said Ashmodai, "he happened to be standing just over the buried treasure of a king, yet he was divining for buried treasure." Thereupon Ashmodai was set free.

The following anecdotes are of interest because of their semi-historical character.

THE EMPEROR AND THE PATRIARCH

The Roman Emperor Antoninus said to the Patriarch, Rabbi Judah, "Two things I wish; that my son, Severus should become emperor after me, and that the city of Tiberias should be declared a Roman colony. If I ask the Senate for one thing they will grant it, but if I ask for both, they will refuse. What shall I do?" Thereupon Rabbi Judah had two men brought, and made one ride upon the back of the other. He gave the upper man a dove, and bade the lower man order the upper to let the dove fly. Then the emperor said to himself, "Clearly he is advising me to ask the Senate to appoint Severus emperor and then to ask Severus to declare Tiberias a colony."

A RABBINIC PARABLE

Antoninus said to Rabbi Judah, "The body and the soul are each able to exculpate themselves in judgment." "How is this?" "The body may say, 'The soul has sinned; for from the day that it separated itself from me, behold, I have lain silent as a stone in the grave.' And the soul might say, 'The body has sinned; for from the day that I separated from it, behold, I fly about like a bird in the air.'" The Rabbi answered, "I will tell thee a parable. A king of flesh and blood had a beautiful garden full of precious fruits. He placed two watchmen in the garden, one lame and one blind. Said the

lame man to the blind man, "I see beautiful fruits in this garden; come, and carry me on your back, and we will get them and eat them." So the blind man took the lame man on his back, and they got the fruit and ate it. After some days the owner of the garden came and said to them, "Where are the beautiful fruits?" The lame man said, "I have not feet with which I could go and take them." And the blind man said, "I have no eyes with which I could see them." What did the owner do? He placed the lame man upon the back of the blind man, and then judged them together. In the same way the Holy One, praised be He, brings the soul and spreads it throughout the body, and then He judges them together. Therefore Scripture says, "He calls unto the heaven above, and unto the earth, to judge His people" (*Psalm L, 4*). "He calls unto the heaven above," this means the soul (which, according to *Genesis II, 7*, is a part of God's spirit, breathed into man); "and to the earth," this means the body (made of the dust of the earth).

ALEXANDER AND THE AMAZONS

Alexander said to the sages, "I wish to go to the province of Africa." They said, "You cannot go, for the mountains of darkness bar your way." He replied, "I am determined to go. Tell me how I can best get there." They answered, "Take Lybian donkeys, that can walk in darkness, and also take a ball of thread. Tie it at this side of the land of darkness, so that you may be able to find your way back." He did so, and finally came to a city inhabited solely by women. He was preparing to besiege the city when the women said to him, "If you kill us, it will be said, 'He killed women.' If we kill you, it will be said, 'He is the king whom women have killed.'" He said to them, "Bring me bread." They brought him a golden loaf upon a golden table. He asked, "Can bread of gold be eaten?" They replied, "If you wanted ordinary bread, did you not get that at home; why, otherwise, have you come here?" When

he departed, he wrote upon the gate of that city, "I, Alexander of Macedon, was a fool, for I went to Africa to learn counsel from women."

But it is the Agadic portions of the Talmud, the "stories from the Rabbis," as they are usually called, which command the widest interest because of their lofty ethical teachings. Hundreds upon hundreds of these stories might be told, but only a comparatively few must suffice.

HILLEL AND THE PROSELYTE

A heathen, seeking to mock at Judaism, once came to Shammai, the great teacher, and said, "Convert me to Judaism upon the condition that you teach me the whole Law while I stand on one foot." But Shammai lost his temper, just as the heathen expected, and drove him away in anger. He came to Hillel, Shammai's colleague and the greatest teacher of his day, with the same scoffing word, "Convert me to Judaism upon the condition that you teach me the whole Law while I stand on one foot." But unlike Shammai, Hillel took him at his word, and answered calmly, "What is hateful unto thee, thou shalt not do to thy neighbor. This is the whole Law (cf. *Leviticus xix*, 18); the rest is merely commentary. Now go and learn."

THE MILDNESS OF HILLEL

Again it happened that two men wagered with each other, and said, "Whoever will succeed in making Hillel angry will receive two hundred *zuz* from the other." Said one of the men, "I will succeed in making him angry." Now it happened to be Friday, just before the advent of the Sabbath, and Hillel was bathing. The man passed by Hillel's house and shouted, "Is Hillel here?" Hillel wrapped himself in a cloak, came out and said, "My son, what do you wish?" "I would ask a ques-

tion." Said Hillel, "Ask." "Why are the heads of the Babylonians round?" (Now Hillel was himself a Babylonian, and the question was calculated to anger him. But he answered mildly.) "Because their midwives are unskilled." The man departed, but very soon returned and called again, "Is Hillel here?" Once more Hillel clothed himself and came out. "What do you wish, my son?" "I would ask a question; why are the eyes of the people of Tadmor weak?" "Because they dwell in a sandy country." Soon the man came again and asked, "Why are the feet of the Africans broad?" "That is a good question, my son; it is because they live on swampy soil." Said the man, "I would ask many more questions, but I fear that you will become angry." Thereupon Hillel sat down and said, "Ask whatever questions thou wilt, my son." Then the man himself became angry and said, "Art thou Hillel, whom they call Patriarch in Israel; then may there be no more like thee!" Surprised, Hillel asked the reason for this outburst, and the man replied in anger, "Because I have lost two hundred *zuz* through thy patience." Then Hillel replied mildly, "Better, my son, that thou lose thy two hundred *zuz* than that Hillel lose his temper."

KINDNESS GREATER THAN CHARITY

Rabbi Elazar taught; Charity is greater than all the animal sacrifices, for it is said, "To do charity and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice" (*Proverbs* xxii, 3). And kindness is greater even than charity, for it is said, "Sow to yourselves charity; reap in kindness" (*Hosea* x, 12); that is to say, when a man sows his seed, he does not know whether he will ever eat of the ripened grain, but when he reaps, he knows that he will eat of it. Furthermore, Rabbi Elazar taught; Charity is not rewarded except for the kindness which accompanies it.

It is taught that kindness is greater than charity in three ways; in doing charity one gives his money, but in doing a deed of kindness he gives both his money and himself. [The same thought is expressed by Lowell in

The Vision of Sir Launfal: "The gift without the giver is bare."] Again, charity is given only to the poor, while kindness may be done to both poor and rich alike; and finally, charity can be given only to the living, while kindness may be shown to both living and dead.

BEAUTY AND WISDOM

The daughter of the Roman emperor said to Rabbi Joshua ben Chananiah, who was a very homely man, "How can such wisdom as yours be kept in so ugly a vessel?" He asked her in return, "Does your father keep his wine in earthen vessels?" Surprised at this question, she replied, "Surely; where else should he keep it?" "People of your station should keep their wine in vessels of silver and gold." She suggested this to her father, and the wine was put in vessels of silver and gold, but the wine soured. Then the emperor asked his daughter, "Who gave you this advice?" "Rabbi Joshua ben Chananiah." He was summoned, and the emperor asked him, "Why did you give my daughter such advice?" To which he replied, "As she questioned me, so I answered her." (As one of the wise Rabbis taught, "Look not at the pitcher itself, but at what it contains.")

THE SUFFERING RABBI

They told of Nahum of Gimso that he was blind in both eyes, maimed in hand and foot, and that all his skin was diseased, that he lay in a tottering house, and that the legs of his bed had to be placed in cups of water to keep the ants from overrunning him. But to every misfortune that would befall him, he would reply, "This also is for some good."

His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, since you are so completely righteous, why have all these misfortunes befallen you?" He replied, "I brought them upon myself. I was once journeying with three asses laden with food. A poor man met me and said, 'Rabbi, give me food.' I replied, 'Wait until I unload the asses.' But

before I could unload even one of the animals the man died. Then I cursed myself, saying, 'May my eyes, which had no pity for thine eyes, be blinded; may my hands which had no pity for thy hands, be maimed; and may my feet, which had no pity for thy feet, be crippled.' Nor was I content until my body was covered with boils.'" Then his disciples answered, "Woe unto us, that we have beheld thee in such a state!"

It once happened that the Jews wished to send a gift to the Roman emperor. They asked, "Who shall go with the gift? Let Nahum of Gimso go, because he understands miracles." So they sent him with a casket full of precious stones. On his journey he spent the night at an inn. During the night the innkeepers emptied the casket and filled it with dust. On the morrow, when he saw what had happened, he said, "This also must be for some good." When he came to Rome they opened the casket and found it full of dust. The emperor was about to kill him and his companions, for he thought that the Jews were mocking him. But Elijah the prophet appeared in the guise of a Roman and said, "Perhaps this is some of the dust of Abraham, their father, which, when scattered in the air, can change grass into swords and reeds into javelins." Now there was a certain province which the Romans had not been able to conquer. They took the dust thither and tested it, and by means of it conquered the province. Then they led Nahum into the imperial treasury, filled the casket with precious stones, and sent him away with honor. When he came to the inn in which he had been robbed, the innkeepers were astonished and said, "How did you manage to return with such honor?" He answered, "Whatever it was I took from here, I carried it there." Immediately the innkeepers tore down their house and brought the dust to the emperor and said, "This dust which was brought here was ours, and this is the same as it." They tested the dust, but it was found wanting, and the wicked innkeepers were put to death.

ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED

Rabbi Levi spoke this parable in the name of Rabbi Johanan.

A certain traveler went forth, and for days he wandered through the desert and found no town, no village, no oasis, no tree and no water, and no living thing. And he went on, day after day, for ten days. And after he had gone on for ten days, he espied one tree in the distance. And he said to himself, "Perhaps beneath that tree there may be water." When he came up to it he found that it stood by a living spring. And when he saw that it was a beautiful tree, with ripe fruit upon it, and beautiful leafage, he rested and cooled himself beneath its shade and ate of its fruits, and drank of the water from the fountain. And it was very pleasant to him, and his soul was refreshed.

When he arose to go on his way, he said:

"Oh tree, how can I bless thee, and what can I say unto thee? If I say, may thy wood be finely grown, it is so already; if I pray that thy shade may be pleasant, it is so already; that thy foliage may be beautiful, it is already beautiful; that thy fruit may be sweet, behold it is already sweet; if I would pray for thee that a spring may bubble up beneath thy roots to water thee, behold the spring is already there, beneath thy roots. If I would say, mayest thou stand in a lovely place, behold thou dost already stand in a lovely place. What blessing, then, is there left for me to wish thee? Only that every tree that is planted from thee may be like thee."

Thus, when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, ten generations came and went and none of them was good, and none of them produced a perfectly righteous man, and in the tenth generation, God saw Abraham and tried him, and it was found that his righteousness had deep roots, watered by a perennial spring of faith. He withstood temptation and persecution for the sanctification of the name of the One true God. He fed and sustained passers-by, and helped the penitent. He brought some of his fellow-creatures under the wings

of the Divine Presence, and made known the glory of God in the world.

Then said the Holy One, "What blessing is there left that I can give thee, Abraham? If I would say, thou shalt be a righteous man before Me, or that Sarah thy wife shall be a righteous woman before Me, or that all the children of thine house shall be righteous in My sight, behold all this is so already! I will bless thee in that all those destined to be of thy seed shall be like thee, a blessing to all the world, and as the stars of heaven spread light for all, so shall thy seed, who shall be like the stars for multitude.

TALMUDIC MAXIMS

The heart carries the feet.

Happy is he who hears and ignores; a thousand evils will pass him by.

Of what use is a torch at midday?

They make an elephant pass through the eye of a needle.

While your fire burns, cut the pumpkin and roast it. (The equivalent of our "Make hay while the sun shines.")

Love and hate are both extravagant.

Give me companionship or death.

We say to the bee, "Give me neither your honey nor your sting."

In a man's presence praise him only partially; in his absence praise him fully.

When you come to a city, obey its customs. (The equivalent of our "When in Rome, do as the Romans do.")

One need not erect monuments for the righteous; their deeds are their monuments.

If one man tells thee that thou hast ears of an ass, pay no attention, but if two tell thee, then get thyself a bridle.

Silence is a fence for wisdom.

Silence is the cure for everything.

A word is worth a *sela*; silence is worth two *selas*. (The equivalent of our "Speech is silver, but silence is gold.")

If old men say to thee, "Destroy," and young men say, "Build," then destroy; for the destruction of old men is really building, and the building of young men is often destruction.

One small coin in a bag rattles loudly.

Cast not a stone into the well from which you have drunk.

By the same standard that a man uses, he himself is measured.

A man can be judged by three things, his purse, his drink and his temper.

Great is labor; it honoreth the laborer.

If you possess knowledge, what do you lack; if you lack knowledge, what do you possess?

He who gives charity publicly is a sinner. (The equivalent of *Matthew* vi, 4.)

Thought of sin is worse than sin itself. (Cf. *Matthew* v, 28.)

"Take the splinter from thine eye." "Nay, take thou the beam from thine own eye." (The equivalent of *Matthew* vii, 3.)

In the place where there is no man, strive thou to be the man.

If silence is good for the wise, how much better for fools.

If two men quarrel, the one who ceases first is better bred.

If a man resists a sin twice, he will never succumb to it again.

If a man commits the same sin twice, he ceases to consider it a sin.

This is the way of slanderers; they begin with good and end with evil.

This is the punishment of a liar; even when he speaks the truth he is not believed.

He who is merciful to his fellow-men, will obtain mercy from God. (The equivalent of *Matthew* v, 7.)

Whoever neglects to teach his son a useful trade, teaches him robbery.

As a man is, so are his dreams.

The place does not honor the man; the man honors the place.

Ascribe not thine own blemish to thy neighbor.

When wine comes in secrets come out.

What a child says in the street, he has learned from his father or his mother.

According to the pain is the reward.

IV. THE MIDRASH. As has been said, the Midrash is the product of the exposition of the text of the Bible by the Rabbis in their discourses in the synagogues. It is, therefore, predominantly ethical in character rather than legalistic, or, to use the customary technical terms, is Agadic rather than Halachic. It is closely related in spirit and content to the Agadic portions of the Talmud, and very many of the stories of the Rabbis in the Talmud are repeated in the Midrash. At the same time the Midrash contains a wealth of matter not found in the Talmud:

THE GIFTS OF GOD

The Rabbis told that when, during the flood, the dove brought back the olive leaf in her mouth, she was asked why of all the delicious fruits of Paradise she had taken only this one bitter leaf. And she replied, "Let my food be bitter as this olive leaf, and be given by the hand of God, and let it not be given by the hand of man, even though it be sweet as honey."

GOOD AND EVIL COMPANIONSHIP

“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise” (*Proverbs* XIII, 20); to what is this like? To one who enters a perfumer’s shop; although he neither takes anything nor gives anything, nevertheless he absorbs a good scent and goes away therewith. Likewise every one who walks with the righteous, acquires some of their good ways and deeds. Therefore it is said, “He who walketh with wise men shall be wise.” “But the companion of fools shall smart for it;” to what is this like? To a man who enters a tannery; although he neither gives nor takes anything, nevertheless he has absorbed a foul odor. Similarly, he who walks with the wicked acquires some of their evil ways and deeds. Therefore it is written; “But the companion of fools shall smart for it.”

EMPTY BARRELS MAKE THE MOST NOISE

The Euphrates was asked why it flows so silently. It replied, “My fields and my crops will speak for me.” The Tigris was asked why it makes so much noise. It replied, “So that I may be heard in the world.”

Similarly the fruit trees were asked why they are so silent, and they replied, “Our fruit will speak for us,” and the trees of the forest were asked why they make so much noise, and they, too, replied, “So that we may be heard in the world.”

GOD’S LOVE

When the Egyptians were drowning in the Red Sea, whose waters at God’s bidding had flowed over them, the seraphim who surround God’s throne wished to extol His might in song. But God silenced them with the word, “These, too, are My children, and while My children perish would ye sing My praise?”

THE FABLE OF THE FOX WHO LOST HIS COURAGE

Once upon a time the lion became angry at all the animals. They said, “Who will go and appease him?” The fox said, “I will go, for I know three hundred par-

ables, and with them I will appease him." They said, "Good; let us go." He went a short distance and stopped. They said to him, "What is it?" He said, "I have forgotten one hundred." They said to him, "Two hundred are enough." He went a short distance further and again stood still. They said to him, "What is it now?" He answered, "I have forgotten another hundred." They said to him, "One hundred are sufficient." But when he drew near to the place where the lion was, he said, "I have forgotten all of them; let each one appease him for himself."

The following is an interesting example of rabbinical humor:

MARRIAGES MADE IN HEAVEN

A certain matron put the following question to Rabbi Jose ben Chalafta: "In how many days did the Holy One, praised be He, create the universe?" He answered, "In six days; for it is written, 'In six days God made heaven and earth'" (*Exodus xx, 11*). "Then what has He been doing ever since?" she asked. The Rabbi replied, "The Holy One, praised be He, spends His time arranging marriages on earth, ordaining that the daughter of so-and-so be married to the son of so-and-so, the widow of so-and-so be married to so-and-so." Said she scoffingly, "Is that all He does? I can do that myself. I have ever so many male and female slaves, and in one hour I can mate them together." The Rabbi replied, "This may seem easy to you, but God considers it as difficult as the dividing of the Red Sea."

Then the matron took a thousand male slaves and a thousand female slaves and arranged them in two rows facing each other, and she paired them off thus and married them. The very next morning the slaves came to her, one with head cut, another with eye put out, and another with leg broken. Astonished, she asked, "What has happened?" Then all cried out with one voice, "I do not want so-and-so." "I do not want him." "I

do not like her." Crestfallen at her failure, she sent for the Rabbi and said, "You have spoken well. There is no God like yours." To which he replied, "Did I not tell you that making marriages is more difficult than dividing the Red Sea?"

These three Rabbinical parables should be of more than passing interest to every reader:

THE TIME FOR REPENTANCE

"Repent one day before thy death," said one of the wise old Rabbis. But what does this mean; how can we know the day of our death, so that we may repent one day before? This may be compared to the following. A king of flesh and blood invited all his servants to a banquet, but did not indicate the hour. Some went home, clad themselves in their best and stood waiting at the door of the palace. But the others said, "The king will surely let us know in time; we need not hurry." But the king summoned them suddenly and without notice. Those who stood waiting, arrayed in their best attire, were welcomed, but the careless ones, who came unprepared and in old garments were turned away in disgrace. Repent, therefore, to-day, lest to-morrow ye be summoned before the King.

THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD

A young man once went to labor in a vineyard among the other workmen, and he labored so faithfully that the master noticed it and was pleased, and he took the young man to be with him. And at evening, when the laborers came for their pay, the master gave to the young man the same wage as he gave to the others. And the workmen were astonished and asked, "Master, how is this? We have worked all day and he but one hour, yet thou givest to him the same as to us!" And the master replied, "Yes; but in that one hour he labored faithfully, and accomplished as much as you toiling all day." Thus the wise Rabbis taught that life is measured, not by

length of years, nor hours of pleasure, nor the riches we get, nor the honors we achieve, but only by the work we do, the service we render and the good we accomplish; and if we but labor faithfully, our lives will be full and worth while, though our years be many or few; and in the end the Master will take us to be with Him, and will grant us our full reward.

THE TWO SHIPS

“Better is the day of death than the day of birth.” (*Ecclesiastes* vii, 1.) This means, better is the day of a man’s death than the day of his birth. Why? Because on the day upon which he is born, no man knows what his future course of life will be, but when he dies, his deeds are known to all. Rabbi Levi said, “This may be likened to two ships which were sailing upon the great sea. One was going forth from the harbor, and one was entering. Everybody rejoiced over the ship, new and bright and fresh-painted, which was going forth from the harbor, but over the ship that was entering the harbor, weather-beaten and strained and with sails old and torn, not one rejoiced. But one wise man was there, and said, ‘I am of a different opinion. I see no reason to rejoice over the ship, of which we do not know into what danger it will come and how the seas and tempests will beat it; but over this ship that enters the harbor in safety, its journey done, bringing home precious stores, every one should rejoice because it comes home from the sea in peace and enters the harbor in peace. So, too, when a man is born, they consider that he must die, but when he is dead, they consider only his life’s service.’ In this sense Solomon said, ‘Better the day of death than the day of birth.’ ”

SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT

Scripture says, “Seek peace and pursue it.” (*Psalm* xxxiv, 15.) It happened one Friday evening that Rabbi Meir was lecturing in the school. After he had completed his lecture, a certain woman who had been listen-

ing to him came home and found her Sabbath light extinguished. Her husband asked, "Where have you been all this time?" She replied, "I have been listening to the lecture of Rabbi Meir." Now the husband was an irreverent man, with no respect for learning; so he said, "Very well, you cannot enter this house again until you go and spit in the face of Rabbi Meir, whose lecture has detained you so long." Thereupon the unfortunate woman left her home.

Then Elijah the prophet appeared unto Rabbi Meir and said, "Verily, because of thee a woman has been driven from her home;" then Elijah told the Rabbi what had happened. Resolving to reconcile the wife and the husband, Rabbi Meir sat down in the great synagogue. When the woman came in to pray, he pretended to be sick. He came near to the woman and said, "Does any one here know how to cure the evil eye?" Now it was thought in those days that the evil eye could be cured by uttering a prayer and spitting in the face of the person afflicted. To Rabbi Meir's question the woman replied, "I know how to cure the evil eye," and she spat in his face. Then said the Rabbi, "Now go and tell thy husband that thou hast spat in the face of Rabbi Meir, and may peace be established between you."

THE WORTH OF THE TORAH

Rabbi Jochanan was once going from Tiberias to Sephoris, and Rabbi Chiya, his pupil, was with him. Rabbi Jochanan saw a vineyard and said to Rabbi Chiya, "Do you see yonder vineyard? It belonged to me, but I sold it for so-and-so much," and he named an insignificant sum. Immediately Rabbi Chiya began to weep and said, "You have not provided for your old age." Rabbi Jochanan replied, "Does it seem a light thing in your eyes that I should have sold something that was created in six days and should have acquired instead something that was given in forty days? For the world and all it contains were created in six days, but God's Law, to which I have devoted myself, was given in forty days."



JEWISH CEMETERY, MOUNT OF OLIVES

THOUSANDS OF WHITE STONES INDICATE THE GRAVES OF JEWS WHO HAVE WANDERED TO JERUSALEM, TO BE ENTOMBED ON CONSECRATED GROUND. THE SUPPOSED TOMB OF ABSALOM IN THE FOREGROUND.

Again, a disciple of Rabbi Simon ben Yochai once went to a foreign country and came back wealthy. The other disciples beheld him and became jealous, and were eager in their turn to go to this same country. When Rabbi Simon learned this, he brought them out into a certain valley, and he prayed, "Valley, valley, become full of golden *dinars* (a precious coin)." Immediately the valley began to pour forth golden dinars before them. He said unto them, "If gold ye seek, behold here is gold; take it. But understand that whoever takes his portion here, is choosing his portion to be in this world alone; but the reward for the study of God's Law is given only in the world to come."

THE PLEA OF THE PATRIARCHS FOR ISRAEL

Abraham said to God; "Lord of the worlds, why hast Thou exiled my children and given them into the hands of people who slay them, and why hast Thou destroyed the Temple, built on the very spot where I offered my son Isaac as a sacrifice before Thee?" The Holy One, praised be He, replied, "Thy sons have sinned and transgressed the whole Law." Then Abraham said, "Lord of the worlds, who will testify against Israel that they have transgressed Thy Law?" God replied, "Let the Law herself come and testify against Israel." Immediately the Law appeared to testify against them.

Then Abraham said to the Law, "My daughter, art thou not ashamed in my presence to come and testify against Israel? Remember the day when God carried thee around to every nation, and none would accept thee until my sons came unto Sinai and received and honored thee. And now thou comest in their hour of need and testifiest against them!" When the Law heard these words she stepped aside and would not testify.

Then Abraham said to God, "Lord of the worlds, when I was a hundred years old Thou didst grant me a son, and when he grew to the age of thirty-seven Thou didst say unto me, 'Offer him up as a sacrifice before Me.' And I showed him no pity, but with my own hands I

bound him. Wilt thou not remember this, and pity my children?"

Then Isaac said, "Lord, did I not permit myself to be bound upon the altar, and did I not also stretch forth my neck to the knife? Wilt thou not remember this, and pity my children?"

Then Jacob said, "Did I not serve in the house of Laban for twenty years, and when I left, did not Esau meet me and seek to kill my children, and did I not risk my life in their behalf? And now they are handed over like sheep to the slaughter! After I have raised them like fledglings and endured the heartache of rearing children, for most of my days were saddened because of them, wilt Thou not remember this for me, and show mercy unto my children?"

Then Moses said, "Lord of the worlds, was I not a faithful shepherd of Israel for forty years? And when the moment came for them to enter the land, didst Thou not decree that my bones should fall in the desert? And now that they have been exiled, Thou dost send me to mourn and weep for them! It is like the proverb, 'My master's joy I may not share, and yet I share his sorrow.' "

Then Moses said to Jeremiah, "Walk thou before me, so that I may go and bring them, and see who will lay hands upon them." But Jeremiah answered, "I cannot go, for the road is strewn with dead." But Moses insisted, "Nevertheless, let us attempt it."

Thereupon Moses and Jeremiah went, and they came to the rivers of Babylon. The people saw Moses and said to each other, "The son of Amram has come from his grave to redeem us from our enemies."



ON A ROAD IN PALESTINE



CHAPTER VII

JEWISH PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

JEWISH PHILOSOPHY. Philosophy may be defined as the attempt to discover the truths fundamental to the universe and to the spirit of man. But Jewish philosophy in the Middle Ages aimed not so much at the discovery of truth as, rather, at the harmonization of two truths. In fact, not only Judaism, but also Christianity and Mohammedanism, felt the necessity of removing any contradiction between two great sources of knowledge. On the one hand there were the Bible of Judaism and Christianity and the Koran of Islam, which represented to the adherents of these respective creeds the truth of revelation; and among Jews there was also the Talmud, which represented oral Law, likewise divinely revealed.

On the other hand, the doctrines taught by Plato and Aristotle were considered just as authentic as the truths of the Bible and the Koran. One can never understand medieval Arabic, Jewish or Christian philosophy unless one realizes that Aristotle, and sometimes Plato, also, were regarded as infallible and incontrovertible. Among Jewish scholars it was argued that since one truth can not contradict another, both Philosophy on the one hand, and the Bible and the Talmud on the other, must be true; therefore it was necessary only so to interpret the words of Scripture and the statements of the Rabbis that the innate harmony and unity of Judaism and Philosophy might become clearly apparent. That was the aim of Jewish medieval philosophy.

Of course there had been considerable philosophic speculation before the works of Plato and Aristotle became known to the Jews. The Biblical books of *Job* and *Ecclesiastes* certainly have a distinct philosophic tendency. The Talmud frequently discusses such questions as immortality and freedom of the will. But the discussion was desultory and unsystematic. The effect of the growing study of Plato and Aristotle by the Arabs and, stimulated by them, by the Jews, was to systematize the study of philosophic problems and to make of philosophy not simply a subject for occasional discussion, but an important science fundamental to all religious belief. Therefore, during the Arabic period in Spain, almost all of the great

Jewish scholars were also philosophers. Philosophy was now the greatest of studies.

Jewish philosophers in the Middle Ages may be divided into two groups: those who based their philosophy upon Plato and those who based it upon Aristotle. The Arabic and Christian philosophers also were divided into Platonists and Aristotelians. The latter held that matter is eternal and has an independent existence, while the Platonists denied independent existence to matter, and said that matter is the cause of all evil. The first great Jewish philosopher was Saadya (892-942). Most of his writings were prompted by the desire to put Judaism, as interpreted by the Rabbis, upon so firm a basis that it could resist all attacks.

The earliest Jewish philosophers in Spain were Platonists. The best known of these are Bachya ibn Pakuda (eleventh century), author of an ethical-philosophical work, *The Duties of the Heart*; Solomon ibn Gabirol (born 1022), who besides being a talented poet, wrote the important philosophic work, *The Fountain of Life* and the ethical work, *The Improvement of the Moral Qualities*; and finally, Jehuda Halevi, who, although primarily a poet, wrote the philosophic work, *The Cuzari*. The first important Aristotelian was Abraham ibn Daud (1110-1180), who wrote *Sublime Faith*. Moses Maimonides (1135-1204), the great Talmudist and physician, the greatest Jewish scholar of medieval times, wrote *The Guide of the Perplexed*, the classical attempt to harmonize

Aristotle with the traditional doctrines of Judaism.

After Maimonides philosophy declined. When he died the Jewish people divided into two camps, one following his teachings ardently, and the other denouncing him as a heretic, and striving to bring about the abolition of the study of philosophy. The two greatest successors of Maimonides were Chasdai Crescas (fourteenth century), author of *The Light of the Lord*, and Levi ben Gershom (1288–1344), who wrote *The Wars of the Lord*. In the next century philosophy declined, and gave way gradually to the mystic speculations of *Kabbala*.

The Cuzari, by Jehuda Halevi, is built around the framework of the legend that when Bulan, the first of the Chazars, a Tartar nation on the northern coast of the Black Sea, wished to abandon heathenism, he called the representatives of Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, and asked them to present the claims of their respective religions. This book is in the form of a dialogue, chiefly between the King and the Rabbi, and sets forth the fundamental principles of Judaism. The following extract is from Part I, paragraphs 110–117, and is based upon the translation of Hartwig Hirschfeld :

The King: It does not agree with common sense that when man perishes, body and soul should disappear at the same time, as is the case with animals, and that the philosophers alone will, as they believe, escape. The same

applies to the statement made by believers in other faiths, that man, by pronouncing one word alone, may inherit Paradise, even if, during the whole of his life, he knew no other word than this, and of this did not even understand the full significance, viz.: that that one word raised him from the ranks of a brute to that of an angel.

The Rabbi: We do not deny that the good actions of any man, to whatever people he may belong, will be rewarded by God. But the priority belongs to people who are near God during life, and we estimate the rank they occupy near God after death accordingly.

The King: Apply this also in the other direction, and judge their degree in the next world according to their station in this.

The Rabbi: I see thee reproaching us with our degradation and our poverty; but the best of other religions are proud of poverty and degradation. Do they not glorify him who said, "He who smites thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left also; and he who takes away thy coat, let him have thy shirt also"? He and his friends and followers, after hundreds of years of contumely, flogging and slaying, attained their well-known success, and in just these things they glorify. This is also the history of the founder of Islam and his friends, who eventually prevailed and became powerful. The nations boast of these, but not of those kings whose power and might are great, whose walls are strong, and whose chariots are terrible. Yet our relation to God is a closer one than if we had reached greatness already on earth.

The King: This may be so, if your humility is voluntary; but it is involuntary, and if you had the power, you would slay.

The Rabbi: Thou hast touched our weak spot, O King of the Chazars. If the majority of us, as thou sayest, would learn humility towards God and His law from our low station, Providence would not force us to bear it for so long a period. But only the smallest portion of

us thinks thus. Yet the majority, too, may expect a reward, because they bear their degradation partly from necessity, partly of their own free will. For whoever wishes to do so, can become the friend and equal of his oppressor by uttering one word, and that without difficulty. Such conduct does not escape the just Judge. If we bear our degradation and exile for God's sake, as is meet, we shall be the pride of the generation that shall come with the Messiah, and accelerate the day of deliverance for which we hope. Now we do not allow any one who embraces our religion theoretically by means of a word alone, to take equal rank with ourselves, but we demand actual self-sacrifice, purity, knowledge, circumcision, and numerous religious ceremonies. The convert must adopt our mode of life entirely. We must bear in mind that the rite of circumcision is a divine symbol, ordained by God to indicate that our desires should be curbed, and discretion used, so that what we engender may be fitted to receive the divine influence. God allows him who treads this path, as well as his progeny, to approach Him very closely. Those, however, who become Jews, do not take equal rank with born Israelites, who are especially privileged to attain to prophecy, while the former can achieve something only by learning from them, and can become only pious and learned, but never prophesy. As regards the promises at which thou art so astonished, our sages long ago gave descriptions of Paradise and Hell, their length and width, and depicted the enjoyments and punishments in greater detail than is given by any later religion. From the very beginning I spoke to thee only of what is contained in the books of the Prophets. They, however, do not discuss the promises of the future life with so much diffuseness as is done in the sayings of the Rabbis. Nevertheless the prophetic books allude to the return of the dust of the human body to the earth, while the spirit returns to the Creator who gave it. They also mention the resurrection of the dead at some future time, the sending of a prophet called Elijah Al-Chidr, who had already been sent once, but who

was taken away by God in the same manner as another man (Enoch), who had never tasted death. The Torah contains the prayer of one who was especially privileged to become a prophet (Bileam), and he prayed that his death might be made easy, and his end be as the end of the children of Israel. After the death of Samuel, King Saul invoked his aid, and he prophesied for him concerning all that would happen to him in the same way as he had prophesied to him while alive. Although this action of Saul, viz.: consulting the dead, is forbidden in our Law, it shows that the people at the time of the prophets believed in the immortality of the soul after the decay of the body. For this reason they consulted the dead. All educated people, including women, know by heart the opening prayer of our morning liturgy, which runs as follows: "O Lord, the spirit which Thou hast breathed into me is hallowed. Thou hast created it; Thou guardest it; and Thou wilt after a time take it from me; but Thou wilt restore it to me in the other world. So long as it is within me, I praise Thee and am grateful to Thee, O Lord of the universe. Praised be Thou who restorest the spirit unto the dead." The notion of Paradise itself, of which people often speak, is derived from the Torah, being the exalted abode which was intended for Adam. Had he not been disobedient, he would have remained in it forever. Similarly Gehenna was naught but a well-known place near the Temple, a trench in which the fire was never extinguished, because unclean bones, carrion and other impurities used to be burnt there. The word is a compound Hebrew one.

The King: If that is so, then there has been nothing new since your religion was promulgated, except certain details concerning Paradise and Hell, their arrangement and the repetition and enlargement of these.

The Rabbi: Even this is not new either. The Rabbis have said so much on this subject, that there is nothing which thou couldst hear concerning it, which could not be found in their writings, if thou didst but search for it.

Another widely studied ethical-philosophical work is *The Improvement of the Moral Qualities* by Solomon ibn Gabirol, translated into English by Stephen S. Wise. The following passage from Part III, Chapter II, discusses the nature of grief (apprehensiveness) :

This quality usually succeeds in establishing itself in the soul when wishes fail of realization, and then the soul is brought to such a point as almost to be killed when it loses the object of its love. Oh, what a quality is this! How serious a matter when it comes into evidence, and how waste is its place when it prevails! Thus it was said, "Apprehensiveness is a living death." I have determined to linger here a little in the discussion of this chapter. Perhaps God will grant us grace, and inspire us with excellent words, which may relieve the sadness of man, so that he may find healing in our discourse, because it is impossible to find healing for physical ills other than in spiritual remedies. As this takes firmer hold of the soul, so also it becomes more difficult to find the remedy. Of God we pray that He protect us therefrom in His graciousness.

The constitution of apprehensiveness is cold and dry, like the gall (humor). No man can absolutely escape it. In some it attains immense proportions, so that they thereby become afflicted with physical ailments. Thus it is said (*Proverbs* xii, 25), "Gloom in the heart of man maketh it stop, but a good word maketh it glad." Know thou that this quality is generally visible in the countenance, as thou hast seen in the face of Joseph, who discerned what was in the heart (of the servants of Pharaoh), when he beheld their austere countenances; it being said, "And he looked upon them, and behold they were sad" (*Genesis* xl, 6), and as Artaxerxes said to Nehemiah, "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?" (*Nehemiah* ii, 2.) Thus it is obvious that this quality is generally distinctly visible in the coun-

tenance. Thou shouldst know that if a man be madly in love with this world, which is a world *de generatione et corruptione*, he never omits to seek the gratification of the senses, constantly moving on from one thing to another. If he attain them and then lose them, gloom overcomes him. On the other hand, if he be made to forget this world, and apply himself to the world of intellect, then it becomes possible for him to escape the physical ills which are (occasioned by) worthy acquisitions—that is, if he turn away from vain works and incline in the fullness of soul to ethical science and religious laws. Therefore the intellectual man ought to cast away the lowly qualities of the masses and the grandiose manner of *kings*. If it be impossible for a man to have what he desires, he must desire what he has. Let him not prefer continual gloom. We ought to strive to cure our souls of this evil (disease), in the same way that we must suffer hardships to cure our body and to rid it of diseases by means of burning and cutting, etc. Rather must we gradually accustom ourselves to improve our souls through strength of purpose and to endure a little difficulty in order that, as a result of this, we may pursue a praiseworthy course. We know, moreover, that if we represent to ourselves that no misfortune would befall us, it is as though we desire not to exist at all. Because misfortunes are a necessary condition of the passing of worldly things. If this were not, there could be no beginning. Ergo, to wish that no accident should come to pass is like wishing not to exist. But existence is (a part) of nature, and annihilation likewise is (a part) of nature. Then if we desire that this be not (a part) of nature, we desire the impossible; he who desires the impossible will have his wish denied, and he whose wish is denied is miserable. We ought to be ashamed to give the preference to this quality, grief, and we should learn to rise to a state of beatitude. Let him who would not mourn represent to his soul the things that lead to mourning as though they already were: thus, for example, let him say, “A certain possession of mine will be destroyed

and I will mourn for it," accounting it as already destroyed, or (considering) as already lost that which he loves. Concerning this the poet-philosopher said: "The man of prudence grows up, representing to himself his mishaps before they befall him; if they befall him suddenly, they will not terrify him, because of the things already pictured in his soul. He sees that one thing will lead to another, and therefore he knows the end from the beginning."

But not the least trace of apprehensiveness is to be found in those who are of lofty souls and noble aspirations. Socrates was asked, "Why do we never perceive in thee any sign of apprehensiveness?" And he answered, "Because I have never possessed anything over the loss of which I would grieve." Wherefore let the intelligent man consider that there is nothing in this world that grows, save it be insignificant at the outset and afterward develops, except grief, which is greatest on the day it comes into being, and the longer it continues the less it becomes. The resolute man is he who braces himself up with all his might in the hour of his affliction. Alexander, in order to console his mother about himself (in the event of his death), wrote to her as follows: "My mother, order a great, fortified city to be built when the news of Alexander's death reaches you. Prepare therein for eating and drinking, and gather together in it men from all lands to eat and drink. When that has been done, and all the men are ready to eat and drink what the king has prepared, let it be proclaimed at that moment that no man should enter this abode whom misfortune has befallen." And thus she did upon the death of Alexander. But when she ordered that no one whom misfortune had befallen should enter her house, she noticed (that) no one (came). Then she felt sure that he had wished only to comfort her about himself.

Alexander had heard from Aristotle, his master, that "Grief injures the heart and destroys it." He wished to ascertain the truth of this. He therefore selected an animal, the nature of which was nearest to that of man,

confined it in a dark place, and allotted to it nourishment only sufficient to sustain its body. Afterward he led it forth and slaughtered it: thereupon he found its heart dissolved and melted away. Then he knew that Aristotle had spoken nothing but the truth. Among the words of Galen on grief (we find), "Apprehensiveness is a consuming of the heart, and sadness is a sickness of the heart." Afterward he explained this, saying, "Sadness is felt for what is past, and apprehensiveness for what may occur." In another place again (he said), "Sadness (is occasioned) by what has occurred and apprehensiveness (is felt) for what may come to pass. Therefore, beware of sadness, for sadness is the end of life." Dost thou not see that when the face of man is overclouded (with sadness), he will perish of grief? One of the sages said, "Drinking poison is easier (to endure) than apprehensiveness." Now, if one should ask, what benefit is derived from choosing this quality at the occurrence of misfortune and its appearance, I would answer that in shedding the tears which have become spoiled and stagnant, and which nature is incapable of returning to their place, we pour out the putrid humors, which have become rotten, the chyme, and we remedy it through purifying drugs, and thus we cleanse the humor in such a manner as to cause it to return to its original state. Thus it is known that in some small children there is a spoiled excess, which can not be passed off save through weeping. This, then, is the natural use of weeping. Wherefore Socrates said, "Sorrows are a species of ills of the heart, as diseases are ills of the body." Among the words of Ptolemy on this (subject are), "Let him who wishes to live long, prepare to meet misfortune with a patient heart."

In the following selection from *The Guide of the Perplexed* one of the frequently discussed subjects of Jewish philosophy is treated. Although Maimonides was a thorough-going

Aristotelian, nevertheless he could not agree with Aristotle's belief in the eternity of the universe, since the Bible expressly says that the world was created. The translation is by M. Friedlander:

Chapter XXII. It may perhaps be asked why I have enumerated all the doubts which can be raised against the theory of Aristotle; whether by mere doubts a theory can be overthrown, or its opposite established? This is certainly not the case. But we treat this philosopher exactly as his followers tell us to do. For Alexander stated that when a theory cannot be established by proof, the two most opposite views should be compared as to the doubts entertained concerning each of them, and that view which admits of fewer doubts should be accepted. Alexander further says that this rule applies to all those opinions of Aristotle in "The Metaphysics," for which he offered no proof. For those that followed Aristotle believed that his opinions are far less subject to doubt than any other opinion. We follow the same rule. Being convinced that the question whether the heavens are eternal or not cannot be decided by proof, neither in the affirmative nor in the negative, we have enumerated the objections raised by either view, and shown how the theory of the Eternity of the Universe is subject to stronger objections, and is more apt to corrupt the notions concerning God (than the other). Another argument can be drawn from the fact that the theory of Creation was held by our Father Abraham, and by our Teacher Moses.

Having mentioned the method of testing the two theories by the objections raised against them, I find it necessary to give some further explanation of the subject.

Chapter XXIII. In comparing the objections raised against one theory with those raised against the opposite theory, in order to decide in favor of the least objectionable, we must not consider the number of the objections, but the degree of improbability and of deviation from

real facts (pointed out by the objections); for one objection may sometimes have more weight than a thousand others. But the comparison cannot be trustworthy, unless the two theories be considered with the same interest, and if you are predisposed in favor of one of them, be it on account of your training or because of some advantage, you are too blind to see the truth. For that which can be demonstrated you can not reject, however much you may be inclined against it; but in questions like those under consideration you are apt to dispute (in consequence of your inclination). You will, however, be able to decide the question as far as necessary, if you free yourself from passions, ignore customs, and follow only your reason. But many are the conditions which must be fulfilled. First, you must know your mental capacities and your natural talents; you will find this out when you study all mathematical sciences, and are well acquainted with Logic. Secondly, you must have a thorough knowledge of Natural Science, that you may be able to understand the nature of the objections. Thirdly, you must be morally good. For if a person is voluptuous or passionate, and, loosening the reins, allows his anger to pass the just limits, it makes no difference whether he is so from nature or from habit, he will blunder and stumble in his way, and he will seek the theory which is in accordance with his inclinations. I mention this lest you be deceived; for a person might some day, by some objection which he raises, shake your belief in the theory of Creation, and then easily mislead you; you would then adopt the theory (of the Eternity of the Universe), which is contrary to the fundamental principles of our religion, and leads to "speaking words that turn away from God." You must rather have suspicion against your own reason, and accept the theory taught by two prophets who have laid the foundation for the existing order in the religious and social relations of mankind. Only demonstrative proof should be able to make you abandon the theory of Creation; but such a proof does not exist in Nature.

You will not find it strange that I introduce into this discussion historical matter in support of the theory of Creation, seeing that Aristotle, the greatest philosopher, in his principal works, introduced histories in support of the theory of the Eternity of the Universe. In this regard we may justly quote the saying: "Should not our perfect Law be as good as their gossip?" (*Babylonian Talmud, Baba batra, 115b.*) When he supports his view by quoting Sabaean stories, why should we not support our view by that which Moses and Abraham said, and that which follows from their words?



A JEWISH BEAUTY OF THE WEALTHY CLASS



CHAPTER VIII

KABBALA AND DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE

MYSTIC SPECULATIONS. In the early years of the present era the religious world was seething under the exciting influence of mystic studies. The Gnostics, students of secret lore in both Judaism and Christianity, delighted to speculate upon the construction of the heavens, the creation of the world, and the nature of God. Around their teachings they built a wall of secrecy, and formed fraternal societies for study and contemplation. Their cardinal doctrine was that there exists a semi-divine power created by God; this power is the creator and maintainer of the world; for it was not considered possible that God Himself, wholly spirit, should come into intimate and personal contact with the physical and impure. Another doctrine was

that all things in the universe exist in pairs, male and female. Thus the upper waters in the sky are male, the lower waters in the sea, female.

Gnostic doctrines such as these in Judaism and in Christianity influenced greatly the development of the mystic lore known as *Kabbala (Tradition)*. We know that these speculations were widespread, for the Mishna contains the specific provision that the questions of creation and of the "chariot of God" should not be discussed in public, but should be taught only in the presence of one or two persons of mature intellect.

In addition to this speculation, another element later became a part of the Kabbala, viz., magic. All people at some time or other, and many even to-day, believe in the power of incantations and magical formulas to control demons. The Jews were no exceptions. The teachings of the Pythagoreans, the followers of the Greek philosopher Pythagoras, that numbers and combinations of numbers have certain magical powers, were well known in Jewish circles. Then, of course, there were other forms of magic, such as achieving supernatural ends by pronouncing the names of angels, or, above all else, the true, four-lettered name of God Himself.

In Gaonic times the classic work of this character was *The Book of Creation*. Its speculation forms the basis for all later Kabbala. The essence of its doctrine is that God

Himself is unknowable, and that from Him emanate ten principles, the spirits of air, water, fire, etc. These ten are the agents of creation, and thus God is spared from coming into direct contact with the physical. In addition to these "ten principles," the letters of the alphabet of the Holy Language have a semi-spiritual existence, and assisted in the creation of the world.

II. THE "ZOHAR." Mystic lore continued to develop more or less openly in Jewish circles. At the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries the Kabbala received a new impetus, and its center of activity was transferred from Babylonia to southern and central Europe. The classical Kabbalistic book is the *Zohar* (*The Splendor*). It was written about 1290 by Moses de Leon, a Spaniard, who claimed, however, that the real author was Rabbi Simon ben Yochai, one of the greatest teachers of the second century. The book is written in the form of a commentary to the Bible, and contains nearly all of the mystic Kabbalistic doctrines.

In the sixteenth century the center of the study and development of the Kabbala shifted again to the East. Safed, a city in Galilee, became an important center of Jewish life and thought. Some of the most illustrious scholars of the time lived there. Among them, the greatest Kabbalist of his age, was Isaac Luria. Luria left no authenticated writings, but his disciple, Chayyim Vital, took notes of the lec-

tures of his master, and after the latter's death published them. With Luria a new mystic element entered into Kabbala, viz., intense devotional exercises and frequent repetitions of prayers and formulas and the like. This emphasis upon prayer is based upon the Kabbalistic belief that by prayer and contemplation man can affect the universe and bring the world closer to God.

Israel Besht (1695-1760) founded the sect of Chasidim, whose doctrine was practical Kabbala; that is to say, they emphasized not so much the earlier mystic speculation, but rather devotion in prayer and faith in the miraculous achievements of wonder-working Rabbis, who, knowing the magic use of letters and divine names, can translate themselves into heaven and predict the future.

Thus Judaism has experienced an uninterrupted stream of mystic speculation from the beginning of the present era until to-day. The evil effects of Kabbala can be easily seen. It encouraged the belief in and use of magical amulets, spells and incantations, and thus served as a hatchery for superstition. On the other hand, it comforted the persecuted people, opening to them the realms of imagination when the world of reality was harsh and merciless. Furthermore, the Kabbala emphasized the idea of the supposed influence which man can have upon the universe by means of prayer, and thus it helped to maintain a devout attitude in worship.

The following two quotations from the *Zohar* illustrate the thought and character of this peculiar book. Commenting upon the words, "These are the generations of Noah; Noah was a righteous man" (*Genesis* vi, 9), the *Zohar* says:

Why is Noah's name mentioned twice in succession? It means to indicate that every righteous man has two souls, one belonging to this world, and one to the world to come. Thus you find the name mentioned twice in connection with all righteous men, viz., "Moses, Moses," "Jacob, Jacob," "Abram, Abram," "Samuel, Samuel," "Shem, Shem." Isaac is an exception, in that his name is never mentioned twice in succession. The reason is, that when Isaac was being offered upon the altar on Mt. Moriah by his father Abraham, there departed from him the soul belonging to this world. But whenever the blessing, "Praised be Thou who quickenest the dead" (the concluding words of one of the important prayers of the Jewish Liturgy), is uttered, there returns to Isaac his soul of the world to come.

The idea that man possesses several souls is met with frequently in Kabbalistic literature. This even holds that man has three souls, the lowest in immediate touch with the physical, the second representing man's moral nature, and the third standing for pure contemplation and incapable therefore of either good or evil.

When the soul of man departeth from earth to heaven and resteth in the Heavenly Radiance, they say that the Holy One, praised be He, visiteth it. Said Simon ben Yochai, "Every soul of a righteous man, when it resteth in the place of the *Shekina*, the 'Heavenly Radiance,' which is selected for his dwelling, the Holy

One, praised be He, calleth to the patriarchs and sayeth to them, 'Go forth and visit that righteous man who is coming here, and bring him greetings from Me.' And the patriarchs respond, 'Lord of the worlds, it is not proper for a father to come and present himself to his son. It is proper for the son to come and present himself to his father.' Then the Lord calleth Jacob, and sayeth to him, 'Thou art the one whose children have caused him the most grief; so go thou forth and greet this righteous man who is coming here, and I will go with thee.' This is referred to in the Psalm verse, 'Those who seek thy face, O Jacob' " (*Psalm xxiv, 6*).

Elijah de Vidas was one of the Kabbalistic group in Safed in Galilee in the sixteenth century. He quotes copiously from Kabbalistic works in his book, *The Beginning of Wisdom*:

The greatest aid in the task of banishing hatred and jealousy from the heart, is to contemplate upon and to obey the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (*Leviticus xix, 18*). This is a positive and far-reaching commandment. We are told in the Talmud, in tractate *Sabbath*, that a certain proselyte came to Hillel and wanted to accept Judaism. He said to Hillel, "Teach me the Law while I stand upon one foot." Thereupon Hillel replied, "The essential part of the Law is, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,' and what is hateful to thee, do not do to thy neighbor."

Now, if a man will think of this, he will never despise his neighbor nor disgrace him, for he himself does not wish to be despised by others. Nor will he retort in anger, even when he is insulted, since he would never wish to hear an angry retort addressed to him. And he will be careful to judge his neighbor in the "scale of merit" (i.e., always to give him the benefit of the doubt, and regard him as innocent until he has been proved guilty). So, if one is careful not to cherish hatred nor to bear a grudge, his heart will be cleansed of bitterness.

In any dispute at law a man must be humble; and because love for one's fellow-men and avoiding of disputes and eagerness for peace are the means of bringing men into a proper state of humility, I deem it appropriate to quote the chapter, "On the Love of Man" from "The Light of the Candelabrum," by Rabbi Israel, peace be unto him.

Hirsch Kaidanover, author of *The Just Measure*, from which we quote a chapter, lived in Lithuania and in Germany at the end of the seventeenth century. His book is a devotional manual, written under the influence of the Kabbala. He quotes the *Zohar* in almost every chapter. The book enjoyed great popularity, and many editions were published:

Everything that the Lord has created was made for His glory; and so man, who is really the universe in miniature, has also been created to glorify the Lord. Hence every man must serve God in reverence and in fear. Behold, therefore, a man is truly a servant of God, when he is clad in the sacred garments of righteous deeds. Man can train his body and his soul in God's service by means of these disciplines; by loving the Law, by being consciously obedient and devout in prayer, by maintaining the sanctity of the Sabbath, of the festivals, of his body, and of his thoughts and actions.

Let us speak first of loving the study of the Law. Such love requires that man be eager to learn in God's name, and not for his own benefit, nor in order that he be considered a scholar in the Law, nor even that he merit a share in Paradise. In fact, whoever aims through his study at his own advantage and honor, of him it is said, "His glory will fade like the flower of the field." Furthermore, he who studies the Law, must do so with joy, for God's Shekina rests only upon those who are joyful.

A man must be careful to go to the school which is in his city. Rabbi Jacob, of blessed memory, said, "A man is kept out of the Heavenly Academy in the world to come for just as many days as he has absented himself from the academies on earth." As I have explained previously, a student must avoid arrogance. A man should study the Law every day, and employ all the powers of his mind to solve the difficulties contained therein; thereby he removes the "Shells" (a technical term in Kabbalistic literature for the integuments of uncleanness due to the forces of evil) from the Shekina and beautifies it. One should indeed study industriously, for thus he breaketh through the "Shells," but he should avoid anger while reasoning, for through anger his reason will leave him. He may not lose his temper, even should his pupils be dull-witted.

One should set aside a special room as a place for study. If he cannot spare a whole room, let him have at least a corner of a room. The essential object in the study of the Law is to make a throne for God's Shekina. Now, so long as man is befouled with sin and iniquity, the Shekina cannot rest upon him, for every sin is, as it were, a stinging thorn to God. Hence every man should make confession of sin before commencing his study.

Errors in a book should be corrected, for "Error shall not dwell in thy tents." But one should not guess at corrections, for Moses ben Nachman, of blessed memory, said, "The hand which erases without clear proof of error, will be cut off, and the curse of the Rabbis will rest upon that hand."

He who studies until he is weary will retain what he learns. He who studies in the synagogue cannot forget. He who will scorn to interrupt his study, though his tongue be parched with thirst, will be pardoned for whatever thoughtless or idle things his tongue may have uttered in the past.

Just as a man is in duty bound to obey the commandments, which deal with physical things, so, too, must he obey the spiritual commandment to develop independent

conclusions in his study of the Torah. "Acquire for thyself a fellow-student," say the Rabbis. While this has its literal meaning, it is also a hint at the pen; that is to say, your pen should be your constant companion, so that you may write down whatever new thoughts come to you. One should fix a definite hour each day for the study of the Law; and even were it possible to gain much money at that hour, one should not be tempted to misapply the time fixed for study. So indeed is it the custom in the great mother-city in Israel, the holy congregation of Frankfort-on-the-Main; so strongly do they love the Lord and His Law.

Let a man keep far away from the study of anti-religious philosophy, for it is a strange fire; and concerning it Scripture says, "Her house sinketh down to death; all who come unto her will not return." One should be careful to study in a place where there are windows, so that he can look up towards heaven. This is an aid to concentration.

It is forbidden to quote an authority for a statement, when in reality the man cited did not make the statement referred to. One should beware of quoting the Law in unclean places. One should not be ashamed to accept the truth even from the humblest. If one knows that one's neighbor is unable to answer a certain difficult question, one should avoid asking the question, so as not to put him to shame.

Note what the Zohar says: "A certain child died, and the Messengers of Judgment did not permit him to enter the Heavenly Academy. The child cried aloud, and the members of the Academy trembled at the sound of his voice. Then spake the Head of the Academy, 'Who dares keep a child of the living God from appearing before us?' So the child was brought in and presented to the Head of the Heavenly Academy. He said to him, 'Child, open thy mouth and speak.' The child said, 'I fear to speak, for I belong to another Academy. And as I tried to enter here I was seized.' Then spake the Head of the Heavenly Academy, 'O holy child, fear not. Here shalt

thou remain for seven days and bathe in the sacred dew; then they will lead thee away to the upper Academy among the children.' Thereupon the child gave seven interpretations for every verse which was discussed in the Academy, and he revealed to them marvelous secrets. At that hour they took the father of the child, and crowned him with seven glorious diadems."

It is explained in the *Zohar* that the reason why the Messengers of Judgment wished to punish the boy was because, while he was on earth, he would put his teacher to shame by asking many difficult questions which the teacher could not answer. Now, if that child was about to suffer because he did not spare the honor of his teacher on earth, how much greater must be the punishment of him who puts his neighbor to shame!



JACOB'S WELL.



CHAPTER IX

PRAYER AND POETRY

THEIR DEVELOPMENT. It is natural that a people whose chief interest is religion, whose philosophy is almost entirely religious philosophy, whose legal literature is what might be termed Church law, whose scientific studies were carried on chiefly as an aid in the interpretation of Scripture, should have a well developed literature of prayers and hymns. For while philosophy theorizes about religion, and religious law prescribes the manner of its worship, prayer is really religion in action. Hence it can be easily understood why the Bible, the earliest Hebrew literature, contains many prayers, uttered by nearly all of its heroes, and why most of the Hebrew poetry developed in the Middle Ages is religious poetry, intended for use in the synagogue or in private devotion.

During the Babylonian Exile the Jews frequently gathered to hear words of admonition from prophets and sages in their midst. Very likely, too, in the absence of Temple and sacrificial altar, prayers were composed as the natural and fitting expression of religious devotion. This much is certain, that during the time of the second Temple, representatives of the people were appointed to be present constantly in the Temple, and at regular hours in the day to utter certain fixed prayers, such as the "Hear, O Israel," and most of what is now known as "The Eighteen Benedictions." After the Temple was destroyed by Titus and the schools in which the oral Law was taught had arisen in its place, the original prayers were elaborated and others added, and thus the established Jewish liturgy was developed. The Jewish prayer-book, as we have it to-day, was substantially complete by the time of the Gaonim. The prayer-book has been frequently altered and abridged since the beginning of Reform Judaism. The first Reform prayer-book was published in 1818. The *Union Prayer-book* is the one generally used in Reform congregations in America.

Hebrew rhymed poetry began with the Arabs, who were probably the first to employ rhyme in poetry. The first Hebrew poet outside of the Bible was Eleazar Kalir, who probably lived in the eighth century. He contributed more than any other one man to the poetry of the synagogue. The greatest of all

Hebrew poets lived in Spain during the Golden Age of Hebrew literature. They had at their service a well developed grammatical science, and were sharers in the Arabic culture of Moorish Spain, in which poetry was the most highly cherished of all the arts. Gabirol and Jehuda Halevi enriched the prayer-book with many poetic gems. They also wrote many secular poems of surpassing beauty.

• The following few selections from the prayer-book exemplify well the literary beauty and spiritual exaltation of the Jewish liturgy.

From the Sabbath morning service (version of the *Singer Prayer-book*) :

The breath of every living being shall bless Thy name, O Lord, our God, and the spirit of all flesh shall continually exalt and glorify Thy memorial, O our King; from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God; and beside Thee we have no King who redeemeth and saveth, setteth free and delivereth, who supporteth and hath mercy in all times of trouble and distress; yea, we have no King but Thee.

He is God of the first and of the last, the God of all creatures, the Lord of all generations, who is extolled with many praises, and guideth His world with loving-kindness and His creatures with tender mercies. The Lord slumbereth not nor sleepeth; He arouseth the sleepers and awakeneth the slumberers; He maketh the dumb to speak, looseth the bound, supporteth the falling, and raiseth up the bowed.

To Thee alone we give thanks. Though our mouths were full of song as the sea, and our tongues of exultation as the multitude of its waves, and our lips of praise as the wide-extended firmament; though our eyes shone with light like the sun and the moon, and our hands were spread forth like the eagles of heaven, and our feet

were swift as hinds, we should still be unable to thank Thee and to bless Thy name, O Lord, our God and God of our fathers, for one thousandth or one ten thousandth part of the bounties which Thou hast bestowed upon our fathers and upon us. Thou didst redeem us from Egypt, O Lord, our God, and didst release us from the house of bondage; during famine Thou didst feed us, and didst sustain us in plenty; from the sword Thou didst rescue us, from pestilence Thou didst save us, and from sore and lasting diseases Thou didst deliver us. Hitherto Thy tender mercies have helped us, and Thy lovingkindness hath not left us: forsake us not, O Lord, our God, forever. Therefore the limbs which Thou hast spread forth upon us, and the spirit and breath which Thou hast set in our mouths, lo, they shall praise and glorify Thee, O our King. For every mouth shall give thanks unto Thee, and every tongue shall swear unto Thee; every knee shall bow to Thee; and whatsoever is lofty shall prostrate itself before Thee; all hearts shall fear Thee, and all the inward parts and reins shall sing unto Thy name, according to the word that is written, All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee?

From the Sabbath morning service (*Union Prayer-book*, Part I):

Thou who art the source of all good gifts, bless this congregation and be with all its members, their families and their households; prosper them in their various callings and occupations; help them in their needs, and guide them in their difficulties. Hear Thou the prayers of all who worship here this morning; comfort the sorrowing and cheer the silent sufferers. Bless those who guide and who serve this congregation, and those who contribute to its support. Reward with the joy of goodness the charitable and the merciful, who aid the poor, care for the sick, teach the ignorant, and extend a helping hand to those who have lost their way in the world.

Fervently we invoke Thy blessing upon our country and our nation. Guard them, O God; from calamity and

injury; suffer not their adversaries to triumph over them; and let the glories of a just, righteous and God-fearing people increase from age to age. Enlighten with Thy wisdom and sustain with Thy power those whom the people have set in authority, the President, his counselors and advisers, the judges, lawgivers and executives, and all those who are entrusted with our safety and with the guardianship of our rights and liberties. May peace and good-will obtain among all the inhabitants of our land; may religion spread its blessings among us and exalt our nation in righteousness. Amen.

Lord of all worlds, not in reliance upon righteousness or merit in ourselves do we lay our supplications before Thee, but trusting in Thine infinite mercy alone. For what are we, what is our life, what our goodness, what our power? What can we say in Thy presence? Are not all the mighty men as naught before Thee, and those of great renown as though they had never been; the wisest as if without knowledge, and men of understanding as if without discernment? Many of our works are vain, and our days pass away like a shadow. Our life would be altogether vanity, were it not for the soul, which, fashioned in Thine own image, gives us assurance of our higher destiny, and imparts to our fleeting days abiding value.

Therefore we beseech Thee, O our God, to help us banish from our hearts all pride and vain glory, all confidence in worldly possessions, all self-sufficient leaning upon our own reason. Fill us with the spirit of meekness and the grace of modesty, that we may become wise in the fear of Thee. May we never forget that all we have and prize is but lent to us, a trust for which we must render account to Thee. O heavenly Father, put into our hearts the love and fear of Thee, that we may consecrate our lives to Thy service, and glorify Thy name in the eyes of all men.

May it be Thy will, O Lord, our God, to lead us in Thy ways, that Thy name may be honored and Israel be

blessed by our works. May we walk according to the precepts of Thy law, and, remaining firm in our devotion to Thee, may we never fall into temptation or shame. May our better nature always prompt us to do good deeds with a willing heart, and faithfully to discharge the duties of our station. Gird us with strength to govern our inclinations, and to rule them according to Thy will. Grant, O Father, that our conduct be always such as shall win favor in Thine eyes and in the eyes of our fellow-men. Amen.

O God, keep my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking guile. Be my support when grief silences my voice, and my comfort when woe bends my spirit. Plant humility in my soul, and strengthen my heart with perfect faith in Thee. Help me to be strong in trial and temptation, and to be meek when others wrong me, that I may readily forgive them. Guide me by the light of Thy counsel, and let me ever find rest in Thee, who art my Rock and my Redeemer.

May the time not be distant, O God, when Thy name shall be worshiped in all the earth, when unbelief shall disappear and error be no more. We fervently pray that the day may come when all men shall invoke Thy name, when corruption and evil shall give way to purity and goodness, when superstition shall no longer enslave the mind, nor idolatry blind the eye; when all inhabitants of the earth shall know that to Thee alone every knee must bend and every tongue give homage. O may all, created in Thine image, recognize that they are brethren, so that, one in spirit and one in fellowship, they may be forever united before Thee. Then shall Thy kingdom be established on earth and the word of Thine ancient seer be fulfilled: The Lord will reign forever and ever.

And now, ere we part, let us call to mind those who have finished their earthly course and have been gathered

to the eternal home. Though vanished from bodily sight, they have not ceased to be, and it is well with them; they abide in the shadow of the Most High. Let those who mourn for them be comforted. Let them submit their aching hearts to God, for He is just and wise and merciful in all His doings, though no man can comprehend His ways. In the divine order of nature both life and death, joy and sorrow, serve beneficent ends, and in the fullness of time we shall know why we are tried, and why our love brings sorrow as well as happiness. Wait patiently, all ye who mourn, and be ye of good courage, for surely your longing souls shall be satisfied.

Rise, now, and in submission to God's inscrutable will, hallow His name.

O God, who art the strength of all that trust in Thee, my soul is filled with gratitude for the numberless blessings Thou bestowest on me. With a father's tender care Thou rememberest me every day and every hour. Thou hast endowed me with reason to distinguish between right and wrong, with freedom to choose between good and evil. Thou hast opened mine eyes that I may know the wonders of Thy creation and, above the fleeting things of earth, seek Thee, O Lord, who art near to the hearts of the lowly.

Teach me, O Lord, to obey Thy will, to be content with what, in Thy wisdom, Thou hast allotted to me, and to share Thy gifts with those who need my help. Guide me, O Father, with Thy good counsel, and hold in Thy keeping the lives of those dear to me. May Thy presence dwell within my home; may peace and happiness abide in it, and may love unite all who live under its shadow. And when, in Thy wisdom, Thou sendest trials and sorrows, grant me strength to bear them patiently, and courage to trust in Thy help. Guard Thou my going out and my coming in, now and evermore. Amen.

AT THE DAWN I SEEK THEE

(By Solomon ibn Gabirol [eleventh century]; translated by Nina Salaman.)

At the dawn I seek Thee,
Refuge and Rock sublime;
Set my prayer before Thee in the morning,
And my prayer at eventime.

I before Thy greatness
Stand and am afraid;
All my secret thoughts Thine eye beholdeth
Deep within my bosom laid.

And withal what is it
Heart and tongue can do?
What is this my strength, and what is even
This the spirit in me too?

But indeed man's singing
May seem good to thee;
So I praise Thee singing, while there dwelleth
Yet the breath of God in me.

LO! AS THE POTTER

(By an unknown author; translated by Elsie Davis.)

Lo! as the potter moldeth plastic clay
To forms his varying fancy doth display;
So in Thy hand, O God of love, are we:
Thy bond regard, let sin be veil'd from Thee.

Lo! as the mason's hand the block doth hew
To shapes sublime, or into fragments strew;
So in Thy hand, O God of life, are we:
Thy bond regard, let sin be veil'd from Thee.

Lo! as the smith the rigid steel hath bent,
Softened with fire and wrought with strength unspent;
So in Thy hand, O God of might, are we:
Thy bond regard, let sin be veil'd from Thee.

Lo! as the seaman's hand doth cast or weigh
 The pond'rous anchor in the foaming spray;
 So in Thy hand, O God of pardon, we:
 Thy bond regard, let sin be veil'd from Thee.

Lo! as the worker melteth vitreous flow,
 And shapeth vessels from the crystal blow;
 So in Thy hand, O God of grace, are we:
 Thy bond regard, let sin be veil'd from Thee.

Lo! as the embroid'er's hand the robe hath made,
 At will in lines of beauty, light and shade;
 So in Thy hand, O God of fear, are we:
 Thy bond regard, let sin be veil'd from Thee.

Lo! as the smelter fuseth silv'ry vein,
 Removing dross, that naught impure remain;
 So in Thy hand, O God of healing, we:
 Thy bond regard, let sin be veil'd from Thee.

*Lo! as the potter moldeth plastic clay
 To forms his varying fancy doth display;
 So in Thy hand, O God of love, are we:
 Thy bond regard, let sin be veil'd from Thee.*

ODE TO ZION

(By Jehuda Halevi [eleventh century]; translated by
 Nina Davis.)

Zion, wilt thou not ask if peace's wing
 Shadows the captives that ensue thy peace,
 Left lonely from thine ancient shepherding?

Lo! west and east and north and south—world-wide—
 All those from far and near, without surcease,
 Salute thee: Peace and Peace from every side;

And Peace from him that in captivity
 Longeth, and giveth tears like Hermon's dew,
 Yearning to shed them on the hills of thee.

To weep thy woe my cry is waxen strong:—
But dreaming of thine own restored anew
I am a harp to sound for thee thy song.

My heart to Bethel sorely yearneth yet,
Peniel and Mahanaim, yea, where'er
In holy concourse all thy pure ones met.

There the Shekina dwelt in thee; and He,
God thy Creator, lo, He opened there
Toward the gates of Heaven the gates of thee.

And only glory from the Lord was thine
For light; and moon and stars and sunshine waned,
Nor gave more light unto thy light divine.

O, I would choose but for my soul to pour
Itself where then the Spirit of God remained,
Outpoured upon thy chosen ones of yore.

Thou art the royal house; thou art the throne
Of God; and how come slaves to sit at last
Upon the thrones which were thy lords' alone?

Would I were wandering in the places where
God's glory was revealed in that time past,
Revealed in thee to messenger and seer.

And who will make me wings that I may fly,
That I may hasten thither far away
Where mine heart's ruins 'mid thy ruins lie?

Prostrate upon thine earth, I fain would thrust
Myself, delighting in thy stones, and lay
Exceeding tender hold upon thy dust.

Yea, standing by the burial-places there
Of mine own fathers, I would wondering gaze,
In Hebron, at each chosen sepulcher;

And pass into thy forest, and incline
To Carmel, and would stand in Gilead's ways,
And marvel at the Mount Abarim thine;

Thy Mount Abarim and thy Mountain Hor,
There where the two great luminaries sleep,
Which were thy teacher and thy light before.

The life of souls thine air is; yea, and thou
Hast purest myrrh for grains of dust; and deep
With honey from the comb thy rivers flow.

Sweet to my soul 'twould be to wander bare
And go unshod in places waxen waste—
Desolate since thine oracles were there;

Where thine Ark rested, hidden in thine heart,
And where, within, thy Cherubim were placed,
Which in thine innermost chambers dwelt apart.

I will cut off and cast away my crown
Of locks, and curse the season which profaned
In unclean land the Nazarites, thine own.

How shall it any more be sweet to me
To eat or drink, while dogs all unrestrained
Thy tender whelps devouring I must see?

Or how shall light of day at all be sweet
Unto mine eyes, while still I see them killed—
Thine eagles—caught in ravens' mouths for meat?

O cup of sorrow! let thy stress
Desist a little! for my reins are filled
Already, and my soul, with bitterness.

I, calling back Aholah's memory,
Drink thine hot poison; and remembering
Aholibah, I drain the dregs of thee.

Zion ! O perfect in thy beauty ! found
With love bound up, with grace encompassing,
With thy soul thy companions' souls are bound :

They that rejoice at thy tranquillity,
And mourn the wasteness of thine overthrow,
And weep at thy destruction bitterly ;

They from the captive's pit, each one that waits
Panting towards thee ; all they bending low,
Each one from his own place, towards thy gates ;

The flocks of all thy multitudes of old
That, sent from mount to hill in scattered flight,
Have yet forgotten nevermore thy fold ;

That take fast clinging hold upon thy skirt,
Striving to grasp the palm-boughs on thine height,
To come to thee at last with strength begirt.

Shinar and Pathros—nay, can these compare
With thee in state ? And can thy purity,
And can thy light be like the vain things there ?

And thine anointed—who among their throng
Comparereth ? Likened unto whom shall be
Levites and seers and singers of thy song ?

Lo ! it shall pass, shall change, the heritage
Of vain-crowned kingdoms ; not all time subdues
Thy strength ; thy crown endures from age to age.

Thy God desired thee for a dwelling-place ;
And happy is the man whom He shall choose,
And draw him nigh to rest within thy space.

Happy is he that waiteth ;—he shall go
To thee, and thine arising radiance see
When over him shall break thy morning glow ;

And see rest for thy chosen ; and sublime
 Rejoicing find amid the joy of thee
 Returned unto thine olden youthful time.

TO THE GLORY OF JERUSALEM

(By Jehuda Halevi; translated by Nina Davis.)

Beautiful height ! O joy ! the whole world 's gladness !
 O great King 's city, mountain blest !
 My soul is yearning unto thee—is yearning
 From limits of the west.

The torrents heave from depths of mine heart 's passion,
 At memory of thine olden state :
 The glory of thee which was born to exile,
 Thy dwelling desolate.

And who shall grant me but to rise and reach thee,
 Flying on eagle 's pinions fleet,
 That I may shed upon thy dust, beloved,
 Tears, till thy dust grow sweet ?

I seek thee, though thy King be no more in thee,
 Though where the balm hath been of old—
 Thy Gilead 's balm—be poisonous adders lurking,
 Winged scorpions manifold.

Is it not to thy stones I shall be tender ?
 Shall I not kiss them verily ?
 Shall not the earth taste on my lips be sweeter
 Than honey—the earth of thee ?

“ADON OLAM” (THE LORD OF ALL)

(Author unknown; translated by F. De Sola Mendes.
 From the liturgy of the Sabbath.)

The Lord of all, who reigned supreme
 Ere first creation 's form was framed ;
 When all was finished by His will
 His name Almighty was proclaimed.

When this, our world, shall be no more,
 In majesty He still shall reign,
 Who was, Who is, Who will for aye
 In endless glory still remain.

Alone is He, beyond compare,
 Without division or ally,
 Without initial date or end,
 Omnipotent He rules on high.

He is my God, my Savior He,
 To whom I turn in sorrow's hour—
 My banner proud, my refuge sure—
 Who hears and answers with His power.

Then in His hand myself I lay,
 And trusting sleep, and wake with cheer;
 My soul and body are His care;
 The Lord doth guard, I have no fear.

THE LIFTING OF MINE HANDS

(By Mordecai ben Sabbatai [thirteenth century];
 translated by Nina Salaman. From the liturgy
 of the Day of Atonement.)

The lifting of mine hands accept of me
 As though it were pure evening sacrifice,
 And let my prayer be incense of sweet spice
 Accounted right and perfect unto Thee.
 And when I call Thee, hear; for day once more
 Sinks to the hour when Israel brought of yore
 The evening sacrifice.

My words before Thee shall be savors sweet,
 O everlasting Rock; and all the waste
 Of strength and body spent in this my fast
 Shall seem to Thee a sacrifice complete.
 Take mine heart's prayer, which, these ten days within,
 I have prepared like offerings for sin
 And evening sacrifice.

Seek them this day that seek Thee ; let them find
 Thy mercy, sought from Thee by their lips' fruit.
 Look at their throng assembled destitute ;
 Cleanse them like silver seven times refined.
 Accept their prayer like one lamb, where there stand
 Two hundred sheep from Israel's pasture-land
 For evening sacrifice.

Count it a whole burnt-offering when I call ;
 Prevail with him that is my wrongful foe.
 O make my righteousness like light to glow
 Before the sun shall set and evening fall.
 Each man pours out his heart in this his word,
 And brings his gift to offer to the Lord
 An evening sacrifice.

Jeshurun, thy people, of Thy mercy sing,
 Holding a goodly doctrine ; bend Thine ear,
 Open Thine eyes on them, and see, and hear
 How good it is to stand thus tarrying
 At portals of Thy pity, till Thou lift
 Out of the hand of him that brings his gift
 An evening sacrifice.

In Thy great mercy hear and understand
 My words, my meditation ; if I hold
 Grace in Thy sight, O God, Who from of old
 Hast been a dwelling-place, then from mine hand
 Take Thou the gift I bring Thee, pleading here
 With supplication when the hour draws near
 For evening sacrifice.

God whom we have not found, whose might is whole
 For them Thou madest Thine in ages gone,
 If man give much or little 'tis all one—
 When he returns Thou wilt accept his soul—
 If but his heart be true when he shall draw
 Nigh with his offering ; this is all the law
 Of evening sacrifice.

When sanctuary and altar stood of old
 Within their border on the ancient spot,
 They made atonement, choosing forth by lot
 He-goats for offering ; now, if God should hold
 That our transgression should our death demand,
 He would not take burnt-offering from our hand
 For evening sacrifice.

But supplications do Thy people speak,
 Seeking forgiveness with a bitter heart ;
 Behold them standing at the siege, apart,
 Watching, entreating Thee whose face they seek,
 Hoping Thou wilt give respite for their debt
 At even—saying, “I shall appease him yet
 With evening sacrifice.”

Jerusalem Thy city build again,
 And all her cities strengthen round about,
 And her oppressed prisoners bring out
 To freedom, loosened from the binding chain.
 Sweet be their offering as in days of yore,
 And Thou wilt turn, Thou will accept once more
 Their evening sacrifice.

All Israel’s outcasts, Judah’s scattered ones
 Shall yet again be gathered to Thine hand,
 And fed as by a shepherd in good land ;
 And God shall sit refining Israel’s sons
 Like gold, until their cleansing shall be wrought,
 And they shall be to Him as though they brought
 An evening sacrifice.

I AM THE SUPPLIANT

(By Baruch ben Samuel [died in Mayence, 1221] ;
 translated by Nina Salaman. From the liturgy
 of the Day of Atonement.)

I am the suppliant for my people here,
 Yea, for the House of Israel, I am he ;
 I seek my God’s benign and heedful ear,
 For words that rise from me.

Amid the walls of hearts that stand around,
My bitter sighs surge up to mount the sky;
Ah! how my heart doth pant with ceaseless bound
For God, my Rock on high.

With mighty works and wondrous He hath wrought,
Lord of my strength, my God. When me He bade
To make a sanctuary for Him, I sought,
I labored, and 'twas made.

The Lord, my God, He hath fulfilled His word—
He ruleth as an all-consuming fire—
I came with sacrifice, my prayer He heard,
He granted my desire.

My sprinkling He accepted at the dawn
Of this, the holiest day, the chosen one,
When with the daily offering of the morn
The High Priest had begun.

And when the services thereafter came,
In glorious order, each a sacred rite,
I, bending low, and calling on the Name,
Confessed before His sight.

The holy Priests, the ardent, for their sin
Upon this day made their atonement then,
With blood of bullocks and of goats, within
The city full of men.

The Priest with glowing censer seemed as one
Preparing for the pure a way by fire.
I brought two rams and entered as a son
That cometh to his sire.

The bathings and ablutions, as 'twas meet,
Were all performed according to their way;
Then passed before the throne of God complete
The service of the day.

And when sweet strains of praise to glorify
Burst forth in psalmody and songs of love,
Yea, when I heard the voice uplifted high,
I raised mine hand above.

The rising clouds of incense mantled o'er
The mercy-seat within its sacred space:
Then glory filled me, and my soul would soar
To yon exalted place.

Of ancient times I dream, of vanished days;
Now wild disquiet rageth unrestrained;
Scorned and reproached by all, from godly ways
Have I, alas, refrained.

Afar mine eyes have strayed, and I have erred,
Even the hearing of mine ears I quelled;
And righteous is the Lord, for at His word
I sorely have rebelled.

Perverseness have I loved, and wrongful thought,
And hating good, strove righteousness to shun,
And in mine actions foolishness have wrought;
Great evil have I done.

Pardon, I pray Thee, our iniquity,
O God, from Thine high dwelling, and behold
The souls that in affliction weep to Thee—
For lo! I have grown old.

Work for me, I beseech Thee, marvels now,
O Lord of Hosts! in mercy lull our fears;
Answer with potent signs, and be not Thou
Silent to all my tears.

Open Thine hand exalted, nor revile
The hearts not comforted, but pierced with care,
Praying with fervent lips, that know not guile,
O hearken to my prayer!

Look Thou upon my sorrow, I implore,
But not upon the sin that laid me low;
Judge, God, the cause of mine affliction sore,
Let me not see my woe.

Ah, Thou my Maker! I have called on Thee,
Pictured my thought to Thee, pronounced my word;
And at the time my spirit failed in me,
Remembered I the Lord.

Behold my wound, Thou Keeper of relief!
Let me Thine ears with voice of weeping win;
Seek in Thy mercy balsam for my grief,
But seek not for my sin.

Give ear unto my voice, O hear my call!
And give me peace, for Thou art great to save.
What profit is there in my blood, my fall
Down low unto the grave?

But I unceasing will declare Thy praise;
Grant my atonement, though I sinned so oft.
Bring not my word to nothingness, but raise
My fallen sheaf aloft.

Redeem Thy son, long sold to bondage grim,
And on his substance let Thy blessing flow;
How long, O Lord, ere Thou wilt say to him,
"I know, my son, I know."

I see thee heavy-laden with thy care,
With sorrow's burden greater than thy strength;
I hear thee wailing: yea, but I will spare,
And will redeem at length."

O my Redeemer, only now behold
The chains that bind me 'neath their cruel sway;
And seek Thy servant, wandered from the fold,
A lost sheep, gone astray.

Beauty's perfection lieth fallen low,
Broken and waste, which stood in majesty ;
For all my glory fled when, long ago,
The One went out from me.

My strong bars He hath broken every one ;
He hath been wroth with me : I am bereft.
And my beloved One hath turned and gone :
A desert am I left.

My gates are sunken, they that stood so high ;
My sacred doors are shattered and laid waste ;
Lo ! they are moved and fallen hence ; and I
Am humbled and disgraced.

Dumb are mine advocates in mine appeal,
High in their pride my scorers raise their crest ;
They quench my light, they darkly do conceal
My welfare and my rest.

O Lord, my God ! all strength abides in Thee ;
O hear my voice, as humbly here I bow ;
And let the sentence of Thy judgment be,
"Take thou my blessing now."

Behold me fallen low from whence I stood,
And mine assembly with compassion see ;
And this my soul, mine only one, 'tis good
To give it unto Thee.

Take back Thy son once more, and draw him near ;
Hide not from him the radiance of Thine eye,
Turn not away, but bend a favoring ear
Unto my plaint, my cry.



CHAPTER X

BIBLICAL COMMENTARIES

THEIR DEVELOPMENT. In a very definite sense almost all post-Biblical Hebrew literature is simply a commentary on the Bible. The very theory of the oral Law presupposes this. If, according to the teachings of the Rabbis, Moses received at Sinai both the written and the oral Law, and if most of the teachings of the oral Law are to be found by implication in the five books of the written Law, then there would develop necessarily a large number of rules for the interpretation of the written Law, by means of which the teachings of the oral Law could be evolved. Thus the Mishna, the first post-Biblical code,

was arranged from original Midrashic, or interpretive, commentaries upon the Bible. The Talmud, which comments in turn upon the Mishna and is in a sense a Biblical commentary one degree removed, also quotes Biblical verses directly, and interprets them to suit the purposes of its argument. All of the Midrash, the records of the sermons delivered in the synagogues, is based upon the Biblical section read each week in the houses of worship.

There gradually developed, however, an interpretation of the Biblical text independent of the conclusions of the Rabbis who composed the Mishna, Talmud and Midrash. The Karaites, a Jewish sect who refused to accept the authority of the Rabbis and the teachings of the Mishna, Talmud and Midrash, led the way to an independent interpretation of Scripture. And in the battle between the rest of the Jews and the Karaites, medieval Jewish commenting upon the Bible was born. Saadya (892-942), the philosopher and the greatest of the Gaonim, was the chief opponent of the Karaites. Now, since the traditional interpretation of the Midrash and Talmud was of no value in arguments with them, he was compelled to develop an independent interpretation of Scripture, which even they could not lightly reject. He was aided in his task by the fact that he was a scientific Hebrew grammarian. Using his grammatical knowledge, he wrote a commentary to the Bible, in which he endeavored to

show that the plain meaning of the Biblical text supported the teachings of the Rabbis. Since his day nearly all the Biblical commentators have made use of grammatical science in expounding the simple meaning of Scripture.

II. INDIVIDUAL COMMENTATORS. The most popular is Solomon ben Isaac, surnamed Rashi (1040-1105), of Troyes, France. He makes frequent use of the old Midrashic literature, but has also a fine sense of grammar, which aided him in getting at the meaning of the text. Next to him in popularity is Abraham ibn Ezra, a Spanish commentator, who died in 1167. His comments are concise, epigrammatic, and often quite critical of accepted notions of the meaning of Scripture. David Kimchi of Narbonne was a follower of the great philosopher Maimonides, and therefore offers simple, and usually rational expositions of the Bible. Moses ben Nachman, who lived in France and Spain in the thirteenth century, was inclined to believe that Scripture has an inner meaning, not evident on the surface. He was a partial adherent of the mystic Kabbalistic lore, and often interpreted Scripture in such a way as to support mystic ideas. There were many other Jewish commentators of the Bible, some philosophical and others mystical, but these are the most important.

From Rashi:

Commenting on the verse, "These are the generations of Noah; Noah was a righteous man, perfect in his generations; Noah walked with God" (*Genesis vi, 9*): Why

does Scripture say, "Noah was a righteous man"? Because since Scripture once mentions him, it also praises him, since it says, "The mentioning of the righteous bringeth blessing." Another explanation is that the purpose of telling that Noah was a righteous man, is to teach that the essential generations of the righteous man are his righteous deeds.

"In his generations:" Some of our Rabbis interpret these words in a complimentary sense, saying that if Noah had lived in a generation of righteous people, he would have been even more righteous than he was. Others interpret these words in a way derogatory to Noah, saying that if Noah had lived in the generation of Abraham, he would hardly have been considered worthy of notice.

"Noah walked with God:" God, referring to Abraham, said, "He who walked *before* Me" (while here, in the case of Noah, it says, "Noah walked *with* God"). The reason for the difference in phrasing is that Noah needed support in his righteous deeds, but Abraham was strong enough in his righteousness to walk alone.

Commenting on the verses, "Hear O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is one. And thou shalt love the Lord, thy God" (*Deuteronomy vi, 4-5*) : "The Lord, our God, is one;" that is to say, the God who is our God now, and is not yet the God of the heathen, will in the future be the only God worshiped on earth. As it is said, "Then shall I change the speech of the nations into purity, so that they shall all call upon the name of the Lord;" and also, "On that day the Lord shall be one and His name shall be one."

"And thou shalt love the Lord:" Obey His behests out of love. The one who is obedient through love is better than he who is obedient through fear; for one who serves his master through fear, may, if the tasks become too severe, desert him altogether.

Commenting on the verse, "All the commandments which I command thee this day, shall ye observe to do:"

Why does Scripture say, “*All* the commandments”? The homiletic interpretation is, if you have begun to obey a commandment, then finish it, since a commandment is credited only to the one who finishes it. Notice that Scripture says: “The bones of Joesph, which the children of Israel brought out of Egypt, they buried in Shechem” (*Joshua xxiv*, 32). Now why is it said, “Which the children of Israel brought out of Egypt?” Was it not Moses alone who arranged for bringing along the bones of Joseph out of Egypt? True; but because he did not have the opportunity of finishing the task, and the children of Israel finished it, the deed is credited to them. (Therefore Scripture says, “*All* the commandments,” meaning that if you begin a deed, you should also finish it.)

Commenting on the verse, “Now, O Israel, what doth the Lord ask of Thee; but to fear the Lord, thy God” (*Deuteronomy x*, 12): In spite of all that ye have done, God still extends His mercy and His love unto you, and for all that ye have sinned against Him, all He asks is that ye fear the Lord, your God. Hence our Rabbis have derived the principle that everything is in the hands of God except the fear of God (i.e., God may compel man to do anything, except to fear and revere Him. This must come of man’s free will alone).

The following two selections from the commentaries of Abraham ibn Ezra illustrate well his characteristic conciseness and directness:

Commenting on the verse, “These are the generations of Noah; Noah was a righteous man, perfect in his generations” (*Genesis vi*, 9): The expression “generations of Noah” means the “history of Noah;” similarly the expression in *Proverbs*, “Thou knowest not what the day will bring forth” (i.e., the expression “bring forth” in Hebrew is derived from the same verb root as the word “generations”).

"A righteous man:" in his actions.

"Perfect:" in his heart. "Perfect" is an adjective, derived from a Hebrew verb of the class in which the last two letters of the root are identical.

"Generations:" the reason for the plural is to indicate that Noah lived through his own generation (i.e., the generation of the Flood), and through the later generations until the time when Abraham was fifty-eight years of age. A way to remember this fact is to note that the numerical value of the letters of Noah's name amount to fifty-eight, which was Abraham's age when Noah died.

Commenting on the verse, "And the Canaanite was then in the land" (*Genesis XII, 6*): It may mean that Canaan (the grandson of Noah) captured the land of Canaan from earlier inhabitants. (Then the verse would mean, "The Canaanite was already in the land.") If it does not mean this, then there is a great secret involved; and he who understands it must keep silent.

This last remarkable comment shows how keen Ibn Ezra's critical faculty was. We realize to-day that the words, "And the Canaanite was then in the land," constitute absolute proof that this verse was written some time after the death of Moses, and could, therefore, not have been written by Moses, as tradition holds. For such a statement could have been made only by one writing after the Canaanites had disappeared from the stage of history, that is, after the conquest of the land by Joshua and the extermination or absorption of the Canaanites by Israel. In hinting at this conclusion of non-Mosaic authorship, so unorthodox that he dared not express it openly, Abraham ibn Ezra showed himself one of the forerunners of modern Biblical science.



CHAPTER XI

MEDIEVAL HEBREW HISTORIANS

HISTORICAL MATERIAL. From the earliest times the recording of historical events has formed a considerable part of the task of Hebrew literature. The bulk of the Bible, the first Hebrew literary product, is a history of Israel. The Books of Maccabees in the Apocrypha are histories, as are also the two great works of Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews* and *The History of the Jewish War*. The Mishna, Talmud and Midrash likewise contain much historical material.

We are concerned here chiefly with the Hebrew historians who lived in medieval and early modern times. Naturally, the cultured Spanish Jews, interested in all sciences, were interested likewise in history. Abraham ibn Daud in the twelfth century in Toledo, in ad-

dition to being a philosopher, wrote a history entitled *The Book of Tradition*. His chief aim was to controvert the claims of the Karaites, the Jewish sect that accepted only the Bible as authoritative, and denied the authenticity of the oral Law which was developed by the Rabbis. He tried to show that there was an uninterrupted chain of bearers of the tradition of the oral Law, from Moses down to his day. Incidentally he gives much valuable information about the history of the Jews of Spain.

After the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, the writing of history became even more general among Jewish scholars. Perhaps this culminating act of persecution led many Jewish authors to record the glories of their life in Spain in order to commemorate for their posterity the sufferings which their fathers had endured. Abraham Zacuto was one of the exiles from Spain. In addition to his historical work, he was a renowned astronomer, and Vasco da Gama's journeys of exploration were greatly aided by the astrolabe which Zacuto had improved. His historical work is *The Book of Genealogies*. Other historians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the family of Ibn Verga, who wrote *The Rod of Judah*; Joseph Hakohen, author of *The Valley of Weeping*, and David Gans, who composed a general history, entitled *The Sprout of David*.

II. CHASDAI IBN SHAPRUT. While Chasdai ibn Shaprut was not actually a historian, the

following letter by him is of great historical interest and value. He was unofficial minister of foreign affairs to Abd-er-Rahman III in Cordova in the tenth century. When he heard rumors of the existence of a kingdom of Jews, called Chazars, along the Black Sea, he was eager to communicate with them. His letter did finally reach Joseph, King of the Chazars, and Chasdai received in return a letter in which King Joseph stated that the rumors which Chasdai had heard were true, and that a former king of the Chazars had actually been converted to Judaism, and that ever since the ruling house of the Chazars had been Jews. We have seen that Jehuda Halevi made this tradition of the conversion of the King of the Chazars the framework of his great philosophical work, *The Cuzari*. The kingdom of the Chazars was finally overthrown by Swiatislaw of Kieff in the beginning of the eleventh century.

A letter sent by Chasdai ibn Shaprut, vizier to Abd-er-Rahman, Caliph of Cordova, to Joseph, King of the Chazars, who, he had heard, were a Jewish nation, dwelling on the northern shore of the Black Sea.

The name of the land in which we live is in Hebrew, Sepharad, and in Arabic, Andalus; the name of the province is Cordova. The name of the king who rules over us is Abd-er-Rahman, the son of Mohammed, the son of Hakim, the son of Hashim, the son of Abd-er-Rahman. All of these have reigned in succession except Mohammed, the father of our present king, who never ascended the throne, because he died while his father was still alive.

The kings of all lands, when they heard of the greatness and might of our king, sent gifts to him and besought his favor with valuable presents. Among these were the king of the Germans, the king of the Gevalim, who are Al-Zekalab (the Slavonians), the emperor at Constantinople, and other kings. And through my hand came all their gifts, and through my hand went all their return presents. My lips utter praise to God in heaven, who has turned His mercy toward me, not because of my deserts but solely because of His great love.

I used to question all these messengers who brought gifts about our brother Israelites, the remnant of the exile; whether they had heard any news about the liberation of those remnants who were languishing in slavery, finding no rest. Finally the messengers from Khorassan, the merchants, told me that the Jews have a kingdom called Al-Chazar; but I did not believe their words, for I thought that they said this only to please me and to become intimate with me. But I was surprised about this thing.

Finally there came messengers from Constantinople with a gift and a letter from their king to ours. I questioned them about this thing, and they answered that the report is true, that the name of the kingdom is Al-Chazar, and from Constantinople to their country is a journey of fifteen days by sea. But by dry land there are many other nations between. The name of their king is Joseph. "And," said they, "ships come to us from their land, and bring fish and hides and all manner of merchandise. They are in confederation with us and are honored by us. We exchange messengers and gifts. They have power and strength and armies and hosts, who march out occasionally."

When I heard this I felt new strength; my hands were strengthened, for I had found what I hoped for. I bowed and prostrated myself to God in Heaven. I looked about to find a faithful messenger to send to your land, in order to find out the truth of the report, and to inquire into the well-being of my lord, the King, and of his servants,

our brothers. But the task was difficult because of the distance of your country. And God, in His kindness, sent me a certain man named Mar Isaac ben Nathan. And he was willing to risk his life and take my letter to my lord, the King. And I gave him a great reward and much money for his expenses and for his escorts and for whatever he might need on the way. And I also sent from my own funds an honored gift to the king of Constantinople, and I asked him to help my messenger in every way, until he reach the place where my lord, the King, dwelleth.

And now, if it appear good to thee, O King, and if thou art willing to accede to the desire of thy servant, may my spirit seem dear in thine eyes, and let him order his scribes to write me an answer, which will come to me from the distant land, and let me know the truth of the matter, as to how Jews happened to settle in that place.

From *The Sprout of David*, by David Gans:

I have already written that the West Saxons, who are called Westphalians, broke their covenant, violated their oath, and rebelled against King Charles many times, in spite of the fact that thousands and myriads of them had been killed. More than half of the Saxons of Westphalia and their wives and children and their goods were sent away to another country. Although the nobles of the land had given pledges to the king, and although their sons and daughters were held as hostages, nevertheless, as soon as the king left them, they banded together, conspired and led astray even the strangers who dwelt with them. They rejected Christianity, rose against the Frankish chiefs who were put over them, and put them to death; for they said, "It is better that we and our wives and children should die than be humbled beneath our enemies and accept the Christian religion." The fact that the king had divided their country into six bishoprics was of no avail. At last the king did not know how to deal with such a stiff-necked people, for he feared the Lord too much to exterminate them altogether.

In the second year of his being Emperor, that is in the year 4562 (since the creation of the world, according to the Jewish reckoning), or 802 of the Christian reckoning, he decided to appoint secret judges from his faithful Franks. These were called in German *Freischoeffen*, which means *free judges*. He sent some of them as spies throughout the length and breadth of the land. Whenever they were convinced that a certain man was rebellious, and that he planned treason against the Emperor and his Frankish officials, or despised and mocked the Christian religion, they would order that man to be suddenly seized and hanged at the cross-roads, without having any charges or defense or legal procedure. It would often happen that some of the Saxon nobles would be hanged at the cross-roads in broad daylight. At first no one knew who were the judges, and so a great fear and trembling fell upon the masses of the people, so that no one dared utter a word against Christianity. This procedure proved to be more effective than all the twenty-five wars that the Emperor had waged against them. These judges did not deal with any other matter than treason or blasphemy against Christianity.

After some time, when the authority of these judges became firmly established, they undertook to decide cases of murder, robbery and theft and other similar crimes. When a certain man would be hanged, and his relatives would come to the judge and demand explanation for the hanging, the case would be tried over again, and if it was proved that the man had been hanged justly, he would remain hanging upon the gallows, and if it was not, he was merely cut down and buried. These secret tribunals remained in power in Westphalia for six hundred years, until the reign of Emperor Frederick III, who was elected Emperor in 5199, or 1439 of the Christian reckoning. He abolished these secret tribunals and reestablished the original courts.

I, the writer, have been living in Westphalia, my native country, for many years, and have been traveling through it for over fifty years, and I assure thee, O reader,

that these secret tribunals are still in force. They judge publicly in the open air once a year. They do not deal with civil law at all, nor with robbery, theft nor murder, but only with the crime of libel. Whenever a man charges another with robbery or some such crime, although there be no witness that he made such charges, he is haled before the secret courts. They say to him, "It is clear to us that you have done so and so." And by his answers and defenses do they pass judgment against him. In these days they do not pass the judgment of death at all, but when some one is adjudged guilty in their courts, they make him pay a ransom for his life or turn him over to the regular judges of the city.

Know thou, that these secret judges are called *Freischoeffen*, that is *free judges*, and to this very day they have secret signals and codes. They are found in large numbers throughout the provinces, and by hundreds and thousands in the villages. Not one of them treacherously reveals their secrets. I have always wondered about this.



A MONEY CHANGER



CHAPTER XII

MODERN HEBREW LITERATURE

DEVELOPMENT. The entrance of the Jews into modern political and economic life also marked their entrance into the world of modern literature. As general science ceased to be scholastic and deductive and became more and more critical and experimental, so, too, there arose a "Science of Judaism," free from theological presuppositions, and eager for whatever truth could be discovered in the investigation of its ancient literature. Just as modern literature differed from the medieval in that it was more natural and personal, so a modern Hebrew literature arose, which deals with all human emotions and pre-

sumes to produce even novels and dramas in the language of the Psalmist and the prophets.

Two men were most influential in bringing about this rebirth of Hebrew literature; these were Moses Chayyim Luzzato and Moses Mendelssohn. The former was mystically inclined, and composed dramas and ethical works in Hebrew, while the latter was a calm rationalist, whose work was Biblical translation, commentary and philosophy.

II. LUZZATO AND MENDELSSOHN. Moses Chayyim Luzzato was born in Padua, Italy, in 1707, and lived to the age of forty. His Hebrew style was so simple and so purely Biblical that when he had composed fifty hymns in the manner of the *Psalms*, certain pious men objected on the ground that it was sinful to imitate so closely the *Psalms* which David had written under divine inspiration. His greatest drama was *Praise to the Upright*, composed in honor of the marriage of a friend. His ethical work, *The Path of the Righteous*, became so famous that pious societies were formed to read it.

Moses Mendelssohn was the pioneer in the development of modern culture among the Jews of Germany. His German translation of the Pentateuch did much toward introducing the Jews of Germany to the German language, and aided in the gradual discarding of the Judeo-German jargon which, under the conditions of Ghetto life, they had hitherto employed. He was honored by Jew and Gen-

tile alike as a noble philosopher. He was a close friend of the famous German dramatist Lessing, and the prototype of Nathan in Lessing's well-known drama, *Nathan the Wise*.

III. THE "SCIENCE OF JUDAISM." The "Science of Judaism," one of the main branches of modern Jewish literature, aims at the study of Jewish literary products of the past, with the object of constructing a scientific history of the Jewish people, their literature and their religion. The fathers of this "Science" were Rappoport, Krochmal, Zunz and Geiger. Krochmal's book, *The Guide of the Perplexed of To-day*, aimed to do precisely what Maimonides had tried to do six hundred years before, viz., harmonize Judaism with the doctrines of science and philosophy. But instead of harmonizing Judaism with Aristotle, as Maimonides had done, Krochmal sought to harmonize it with the teachings of the modern philosopher Hegel. In pursuing his aim he had to give a critical exposition of Jewish history and literature, and it is this part of his work that paved the way for the critical work of his successors. Leopold Zunz, another of the pathfinders of this "Science," did most of his work in the field of Jewish synagogue literature. His works on medieval Hebrew poetry were epoch-making. Abraham Geiger showed his keen critical faculty in his very first work, *What Mohammed Borrowed from Judaism*. He was the first to make clear the true relation of the Pharisees to the Sad-

ducees, and, in addition, he produced many scholarly studies in the vast field of Talmudic literature. To-day scientific works of similar nature are produced by Jewish scholars all over the world, in all modern languages as well as in Hebrew, and there are a large number of Hebrew and other scientific magazines devoted to Jewish studies in Germany, France, England, Russia, Palestine and the United States.

IV. PURELY LITERARY PRODUCTIONS. Purely literary work in the Hebrew language developed chiefly in Germany, Poland and Russia. A group of writers called the *Meassefim*, the "Gleaners," after their magazine, *Hammeassef* (*The Gleaner*), were the immediate successors of Moses Mendelssohn. The *Haskalah* (*Enlightenment*) movement flourished in Galicia and Russia. Some of the best modern Hebrew poets are M. L. Lebensohn, J. L. Gordon, M. M. Dolitzky and H. N. Bialik. The best-known Hebrew prose writers include Abraham Mappu, who wrote novels in pure Biblical style, S. J. Abramovitch, who wrote in both Hebrew and Yiddish, Shalom Rabinovitch, best known under his pseudonym, *Shalom Aleichem* (Peace be unto you), who wrote Yiddish sketches of Russian-Jewish village life, which enjoy wide popularity, and many others. Among modern Hebrew essayists Asher Ginsburg, called usually *Achad Ha'am* (One of the people), is preëminent, while among modern Hebrew dramatists David Pinski is, perhaps, the foremost.

There are, in addition, numerous Jewish writers, such as Israel Zangwill, who writes of Jewish life in various languages other than Hebrew, and many who take part in the general literary movements of the world without dealing specifically with Jewish subjects or writing in Hebrew. In the last decade many of the foremost Hebrew writers of Europe have, chiefly for political and economic reasons, migrated to the United States, and this country bids fair to be the center of Hebrew literary activity, for the present generation at least.

The following selection from *The Sufferings of the Jews during the Middle Ages* by Leopold Zunz (1794-1886), translated into English by Rev. Dr. A. Loewy, indicates how this scholar employed the poetry of the synagogue as a source of Jewish history:

Similar are the complaints of the poets, Benjamin, Abraham and Reuben. "Give gold," a theme of which the *Midrash Tanchuma* treats, variously recurs in numberless prayers, some of which describe the oppressive taxes, others the arbitrary requisitions of money and open plundering. "Israel cries aloud on account of the exorbitant imposts. Edom has burdened us with them; and presses us and grinds us down and collects arrears; O Lord, lighten the yoke thrown upon us by the task-masters!" "They are extorting tribute; they come with violence; we are impoverished!" "I am scarcely able," exclaims Gershom, "to bear the yoke of her who thirsts after gold; she cries, 'Fill the measure; bring plenteous gifts.'" Abraham ben Samuel, Eleazar ben Jehudah, and others complain that the Jews are deprived of all their substance; and Amittai states, "They do not content themselves with the confiscation of houses." At

nearly the same time Gershom and Simeon deplore the prevailing distress; similar complaints are heard from all countries.

As long as oppression and exclusion had not subjected the Jews from infancy to habitual contempt, and as long as fanaticism had not yet pervaded the masses, the Jews lived on peaceful terms with their fellow-citizens, for no real antagonism was entertained against them by the people. But the priests strained every nerve to crush the Jews morally, and to withdraw all sympathy from them by declaring that "Jewish" and "diabolical" were synonymous terms. In Syria, as in France, many Christians had visited the synagogues, joined in the celebration of Jewish festivals, and often preferred Jewish to Christian preachers and judges; Jews and Christians visited one another, feasted together, and even inter-married. This drove the fathers of the Church to frenzy; they had recourse to tyrannical edicts and councils. When the authority of monasticism became prevalent, when canonizations and pilgrimages to the tombs of saints were on the increase; in fine, when Hildebrand secured the ascendancy of the priests in Europe, the Jews sank lower and lower; and after they had been reduced by legislation and custom to extreme contempt, it was easy for the populace to belabor the helpless with the abusive epithets.

The following exalted passage from the same scholar's *Jewish Poetry of the Middle Ages* has been made familiar to all students of English literature by no less a writer than George Eliot, who has employed it as the introduction to her *Daniel Deronda*:

If there are ranks in suffering, Israel takes precedence over all the nations—if the duration of sorrows, and the patience with which they are borne enoble, the Jews are among the aristocracy of every land—if a literature is called rich in the possession of a few classic tragedies,

what shall we say to a National Tragedy lasting for fifteen hundred years, in which the poets and the actors were also the heroes!

Heinrich Graetz (1817-1891) is the greatest modern Jewish historian. We quote from his famous *History of the Jews* (Volume III, Chapter 11; translated and published by The Jewish Publication Society of America):

The brilliant luminary of this period and its chief exponent was Abulhassan Jehuda ben Samuel Halevi (ibn-Allevi), born in Old Castile in 1086. In the annals of mankind his name deserves a separate page with a golden border. To describe him worthily, history would need to borrow from poetry her most glowing colors and her sweetest tones. Jehuda Halevi was one of the chosen, to whom the expression, "an image of God," may be applied without exaggeration. He was a perfect poet, a perfect thinker, a worthy son of Judaism, which, through his poetry and thought, was ennobled and idealized.

When Spain shall have discarded its prejudices, and shall no longer estimate the greatness of its historical personages by the standard of the Church, then Jehuda Halevi will occupy a place of honor in its Pantheon. The Jewish nation has long since crowned him with the laurel-wreath of poetry, and recognized the wealth of piety and pure morality that he possessed.

"Pure and faithful, ever spotless
Was his song, e'en as his soul was:
Soul, that when the Maker fashioned,
With His handiwork delighted,
Straight He kissed the beauteous spirit;
And that kiss, in sweetest music
Echoing, thrills through all the singing
Of the poet consecrated."

His deep moral earnestness was closely united with a cheerful, serene philosophy of life. The admiration which

was showered upon him did not destroy his modesty, and despite his devotion to his friends, he still preserved his own peculiar characteristics and the independence of his views. His rich store of knowledge clustered about one center, and however great a poet, in the best sense of the word, he may have been, he was keenly conscious of his own feelings, thoughts, and actions. He prescribed rules for himself, and remained true to them. Deep as were his sentiments, he was far from excess of feeling, or sentimentality.

V. GINSBURG. Asher Ginsburg is a cultural Zionist, which is to say, he is interested in the cultural results which may accrue from the Zionist movement rather than in the political and material amelioration of the condition of the Jews, which it aims to bring about. Many of his essays protest against what he considers the neglect on the part of modern Zionism of the spiritual things in Jewish life and its over-emphasis upon the political and material. The following selection is characteristic; it is from *The Essays of Achad Ha'am*, translated by Leon Simon, and published by the Jewish Publication Society of America:

Thus the "problem of culture" was a child of political Zionism. For centuries our people have suffered torments for the sake of the preservation of the products of their national spirit, seeing in these products the be-all and end-all of their existence. And now that they have at last come to recognize that suffering alone is not enough, but that it is necessary to work actively for the national revival—now, forsooth, it has become a "question," whether the strengthening of the national spirit and the development of the nation's spiritual products are

essential parts of the work of the revival. And this question is answered by many in the negative!

But it must be added that this negative attitude, if we may trust those who adopt it, does not involve any disposition to "cultural" work as such. "Far be it from us," they say, "to deny the usefulness of such work. Though we do not regard it as Zionist work, we do not say that Zionists should not take it up. On the contrary, we actually encourage them to take part in cultural work so far as they can. But we do not wish to make it obligatory on them, because that would be mixing up Zionism with matters which are not essential to it, and have no necessary connection with its principles." Certainly it cannot be denied that many of these Zionists, who regard "culture as something foreign to the conception of Zionism, do in fact take part in cultural work, do in fact found schools and libraries, and in some cases even help in the diffusion of Hebrew literature and so forth. Nay, more: if you examine Zionist societies in various places, you will find that it is precisely such work that keeps them alive. Wherever a Zionist society really lives, its life is generally a result of cultural work, because such work can obtain a hold on the members, and give them the opportunity of persistent and devoted activity of a concrete nature, which has a visible usefulness. And, on the other hand, where a society is content to do no more for Zionism than sell "shekolim" and shares and hold "political" lectures, there you will generally notice a feeling of emptiness and the absence of a life-giving force; and in the end such a society pines and wastes away for lack of food, for lack, that is, of solid and constant work, which can rivet the attention, occupy the mind, and rouse the emotions and the will without intermission. All this is quite true. But to what conclusion does it drive us? Those who oppose "culture" conclude that there is no need to talk a great deal about "cultural work," or to argue and dispute about the purely theoretical question, whether such work is essentially bound up with the conception of Zionism,

or not. This question, they say, is purely one of theory; in actual practice most Zionists do perform their share of this work to the best of their ability. But this conclusion is right only from the point of view of the interests of culture; it is not right from that of Zionism. It may be true that cultural work needs no express sanction from Zionism, so long as Zionism, in its purely political form, cannot provide its adherents with any other form of work which has greater attractions and a stronger hold. So long as this is the case, political Zionism is bound to rely on the help of cultural work, which is better able to satisfy the mind and provide an outlet for the energies of those who detest waste of time and idle talk. But if this sanction is not necessary to culture, it is most emphatically necessary to Zionism. Every true lover of Zionism must realize the danger which it incurs through the diffusion of the idea that it has no concern with anything except diplomacy and financial transactions, and that all internal national work is a thing apart, which has no lot nor portion in Zionism itself. If this idea gains general acceptance, it will end by bringing Zionism very low indeed. It will make Zionism an empty, meaningless phrase, a mere romance of diplomatic assemblies, interviews with high personages, promises, *et hoc genus omne*. Such a romance appeals to the imagination; but it leaves no room for creative work, which alone can slake the thirst for activity.

When, therefore, we demand a clear and explicit statement that work for the revival of the national spirit and the development of its products is of the very essence of Zionism, and that Zionism is inconceivable without such work, we are not giving utterance to a mere empty formula, or fighting for a name. We are endeavoring to save the honor of Zionism, and to preserve it from that narrowness and decay which will be the inevitable, though undesired, result of the action of those leaders and champions of the movement who wish to confine it to the political aspect.

But before we attempt to make cultural work a part of the Zionist programme, we must distinguish between the two branches of that work. These two branches, though they differ in kind, have hitherto been confused, with the result that the question has become still further complicated.

The degree of culture to which a nation has attained may be estimated from two points of view: from that of the culture which it has produced, and from that of the state of its cultural life at any given time. In other words, "culture" has both an objective and a subjective meaning. Objectively, a nation's culture is something which has a reality of its own: it is the concrete expression of the best minds of the nation in every period of its existence. The nation expresses itself in certain definite forms, which remain for all time, and are no longer dependent on those who created them, any more than a fallen apple is dependent on the tree from which it fell. For instance, we still have the benefit of Greek culture: we drink in the wisdom of Greek philosophers, and enjoy the poetry and the art which that great nation has left us, though the nation itself that created all this culture, has vanished from the face of the earth. But the "state of the cultural life" of any nation is purely subjective and temporary: it means the degree to which culture is diffused among the individual members of the nation, and the extent to which its influence is visible in their private and public life. The "state of the cultural life" is thus essentially dependent on the individuals of whom it is predicated, and with them it passes and changes from one period to another.

VI. BIALIK. H. N. Bialik is the greatest of living Hebrew poets. His best known poems are *The City of Slaughter*, written after the dreadful massacre of Jews at Kishineff, Russia, in 1903, *The Talmud Student*, and *At the Door of the School*.

FROM "ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE SYNAGOGUE"
(Translated by Joseph Sales and Edward L. Israel.)

O tent of Shem, thou never wilt be moved;
Thy ruins shall I once again restore,
And from the heap of ashes that thou art,
Rebuild the walls as in the days of yore.
And as thou wast consumed in ancient times,
Thou shalt destroy the houses of the great;
As on the day when thine own palaces
And stately towers falling met their fate.
When I restore the ruins of My house,
Its curtains shall be wide, its windows broad;
The light shall scatter far the heavy gloom,
And unto all the Gloriousness of God
Will show its splendor through the rising cloud.
On that great day both large and small will see
That though the grass and flower do fade in death,
The Lord alone is to Eternity.

THE TALMUD STUDENT

(Translated by Joseph Sales and Edward L. Israel.)

Oh, who doth know what future days may bring?
Perchance by sacrifice of might and soul
Upon the altar of our sacred Law
I may become exalted in the land,
And my renown will reach both far and wide.

Yea, who doth know what future days may bring?
For many years Akiba kept his flocks,
A shepherd rough and ignorant of books,
And though full two-score winters passed him by,
He studied twelve long years and then became
An honor to his people and his God—
And I am young; yea, young and full of hope.

O Lord, though Thou demand my very life,
I swear by Thee and Thy most holy Law,
There shall not cease the murmur of my lips,

Nor shall there be a stillness of my voice;
I shall not move from where I now set foot;
I shall not grant my throbbing heart repose,
Nor let sweet slumber soothe my weary lids,
Till of this holy Law I drink my fill
And satiate my thirsting for its words.

The cold, chill dawn will rouse me to my task;
And not until the middle of the night
Shall I give ear to Nature's cry for rest.
Yea, by the Torah's sacred word I swear
I shall not halt till through the heavy tomes
Of Israel's Talmud I have made my way,
Till I am wise in Israel's holy Law.

VII. CONCLUSION. Such, in brief, is Hebrew literature, the outpouring of the soul of the Hebrew people, the fairest product of Israel's genius. And since the soul of the people of Israel still lives, and its genius still thinks and dreams and speaks, we may well believe that the complete record of Hebrew literature is not yet written, and that new glories may yet unfold themselves to beautify by their noble lines and figures and rich colors the wondrous picture of the world's literature.



BAKING UNLEAVENED BREAD



CHAPTER XIII

CHRONOLOGY

THE following chronology of Hebrew history and literature, while by no means complete, will serve as a guide to the evolution of the history and the development of the literature which we have considered.

1400–1200 B. C.—Approximate date of the Exodus from Egypt and the settlement of the Hebrew tribes in Palestine.

1150 B. C.—Approximate date of the Song of Deborah, *Judges* v.

1000 B. C. (about)—David on the throne, and the systematic beginnings of Hebrew literature.

932 B. C.—The division of the kingdom.

900 B. C.—the earliest prose portions of the Pentateuch.

854 B. C.—The Battle of Karkar; Ahab of Israel, Ben Hadad of Syria and other Western Asiatic princes against Shalmaneser IV of Assyria; the first authenticated date in Hebrew history.

750 B. C. (about)—The prophecies of Amos.

737 B. C. (about)—The prophecies of Hosea.

737–697 B. C. (about)—The prophecies of Isaiah.

722 B. C.—The capture of Samaria and the destruction of the Northern Kingdom by Sargon of Assyria.

625–585 B. C.—The prophecies of Jeremiah.

621 B. C.—The Book of *Deuteronomy*.

586 B. C.—The capture of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Southern Kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian.

586–536 B. C.—The Babylonian Exile.

516 B. C.—The Temple at Jerusalem rebuilt.

458 B. C.—The coming of Ezra and the compilation of the Torah.

444 B. C.—The coming of Nehemiah.

332 B. C.—Palestine under Greek rule.

301–201 B. C.—Palestine under the Ptolemies.

201–165 B. C.—Palestine under the Seleucids.

165 B. C.—The Maccabean revolution successful; the rededication of the Temple.

37–4 B. C.—The reign of Herod.

6 A. D.—Palestine a Roman province under the procurators.

70—Destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish nation by the Romans.

133—135—The rebellion of Bar Cochba and the martyrdom of Rabbi Akiba.

190—Judah the Patriarch compiles the Mishna.

219—The first school in Babylonia opened at Sura.

375—The Palestinian, or Jerusalem, Talmud completed.

425—The extinction of the Patriarchate in Palestine.

500—The completion of the Babylonian Talmud.

658—1038—The period of the Gaonim.

892—942—Saadya, the greatest of the Gaonim; the founder of Hebrew grammatical science; author of a Biblical commentary and of an important philosophical work, *Emunoth veodeoth*.

913—970—Chasdai ibn Shaprut, vizier under Abd-er-Rahman III of Cordova; patron of Jewish learning.

1022—1070—Solomon ibn Gabirol, poet and philosopher in Spain.

1040—1105—Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac (Rashi), commentator of the Bible and Talmud, in France.

1086—1142—Jehuda Halevi, poet and philosopher, in Spain.

1135-1204—Moses Maimonides, Talmudist, and the greatest medieval Jewish philosopher.

1290—Jews banished from England.

1394—Jews banished from France.

1480—The Inquisition established in Seville.

1492—Expulsion of the Jews from Spain.

1497—Expulsion of the Jews from Portugal.

1516—The first Ghetto instituted, at Venice.

1554—Joseph Karo completes the *Shulchan Arukh*.

1560—Joseph ibn Verga completes *The Rod of Judah*, a historical work begun by his grandfather.

1648—Cossack persecution of the Jews in Poland.

1666—Sabbatai Zevi, the pseudo-Messiah.

1670—Baruch Spinoza completes his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*.

1707-1747—Moses Chayyim Luzzato, poet and mystic.

1778—Moses Mendelssohn publishes the first part of his German translation of the Pentateuch.

1791—The French National Assembly grants full civil rights to the Jews.



ON THE SHORE OF THE SEA OF GALILEE

